











# THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

By STANLEY A. COOK, M.A.

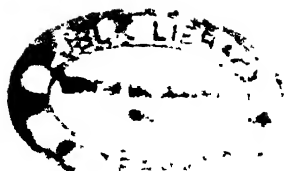
EX FELLOW AND LECTURER IN THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS  
GONVILLE AND CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



LONDON: T. C. & E. C. JACK  
67 LONG ACRE, W.C., AND EDINBURGH  
NEW YORK: DODGE PUBLISHING CO.

1914





## PREFACE

THIS little book is based upon the application of psychology and psychological methods to the comparative and historical study of religions and religious material. No writer on the subject of Religion can avoid what to every reader will be sins of commission and sins of omission. He can only write as the subject presents itself to him at the time, with the recognition that a less imperfect knowledge and a greater attention to the work of others would have increased whatever value his own work may have. Moreover, in his desire to emphasize certain points that seem to him essential, he is doubtless ignoring or dealing too inadequately with points that to others may seem more essential. This little book aims merely at introducing the reader to certain fundamental aspects of the vast subject of Religion; it does not concern itself with the value of any particular religion, or with what may be called the "Foundations of Theology." It seeks to deal with the subject quite generally, though, it is hoped, in a way that may interest and stimulate.





# CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	RELIGION AND LIFE . . . . .	9
II.	THOUGHT AND ITS MOVEMENT . . . . .	19
III.	THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS DEVELOPMENT . . . . .	30
IV.	THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE UNIVERSE . . . . .	37
V.	THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE SUPERNATURAL . . . . .	48
VI.	PROCESS IN MANKIND . . . . .	60
VII.	PSYCHICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MANKIND . . . . .	75
VIII.	CONCLUSION . . . . .	87
	BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	93
	INDEX . . . . .	95



# THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

## CHAPTER I

### RELIGION AND LIFE

THE term Religion is applied to man's recognition of superhuman controlling power, more especially of a personal God, which regulates his beliefs and behaviour, or to such a particular system or body of beliefs and behaviour. Everywhere the term is applied to some part of a closely-interconnected whole: of an individual's beliefs and behaviour only a certain section can be styled religious; the religious side or aspect of him is only one of other sides or aspects; he himself is only a single member of an interrelated environment; and all his religious and other ideas are only a small portion of the entire world of thought. Our knowledge of any part depends upon that of the whole to which it belongs, and since Religion is everywhere bound up with beliefs and behaviour which are not distinctively religious, we cannot properly understand the subject if we confine ourselves to particular pieces of evidence which have been amputated, as it were, and handed over for our inspection. For even if we agree upon a definition of Religion, there is considerable difference of opinion as to where the line is to be drawn between Religion and all that is non-religious.

In course of discussion we often realize that while

## 10 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

some terms are unambiguous (*e.g.* deity), or are clear from their context (*e.g.* spirit), we differ because we are taking different attitudes to the subject implied by the term, and do not give it the same meaning (*e.g.* Religion, Socialism, Democracy). The same term may mean different things to different people, and its meaning depends upon people. When we discuss Religion, or Science, or Socialism, we are also implicating individuals who are religious, or scientists, or socialists. Now such terms are the "labels" upon "parcels" of ideas, beliefs, data, phenomena, &c., and we "pack" them according to our experience and knowledge. Your "parcel" labelled "Socialism" doubtless differs from your neighbour's—differs probably from what it was ten or twenty years ago. The name of any particular political party does not necessarily connote all that it did a generation ago, and we all refuse to allow terms to imply just what our opponent suggests. Language is our servant; we do not lightly change our labels, but we are able to modify the contents of the parcel, and thus we can think of the development of a term, *i.e.* of a body of ideas and beliefs. Further, since for practical purposes we must have a certain amount of uniformity, a group of people will have a more rigid, stereotyped, and conservative conception of a term than will any one individual. Hence Religion, Socialism, and the like will not necessarily mean for any one individual precisely what they mean for his neighbour, or for the group, class, or body to which both of them belong. What the terms connote depends upon experience and knowledge, and the history and development of the full meaning of the terms introduce us to the history and development of experience and thought.

The meaning of the term is bound up with experience and knowledge; if it is to work it must be practical and efficient. And the tendency therefore is to have clearly-cut differences. We class people according to religion, politics, occupation, &c.; and hence, although the premier and the peasant, and the millionaire and

the menial may have much in common, we incline to obliterate the points of resemblance. Nay more, our conception of millionaires, middle-classes and menials, will rest upon those individuals who are thus classified, and after stigmatizing certain work as "menial" we actually proceed to wonder why it is disliked! Now, since all argument must be tested by reference to the real data, unless a discussion of Religion, Socialism, &c., keeps in touch with ordinary human nature, the argument, though primarily based upon experience and observation, may soon become more abstract than practical. Hence a critical study of Religion must be tested by reference to religious individuals of all kinds, and when we hear of the possible decay or overthrow of Religion (or of any system of ideas whatsoever), we have to realize that this can occur only through individuals whose experience is no longer in harmony with the thought of their environment. But immediately this is recognized we ask whether the persistence of Religion has not been due to its continuance to harmonize, in some degree at least, with human life. Did it survive because it was fit? Does not the fact that we change impel us to ask the significance of the things we have retained?

The comparative study of the forms and vicissitudes of Religion has revealed the enormous amount of variation and development in human thought from the earliest times to the present day. But the innumerable striking resemblances are quite as impressive as the differences, and indeed they are of a sort that people are often distressed because the uniqueness of their own religion is affected. Others, however, will recall the famous words of St. Augustine (about A.D. 400)—"that which is now called the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and, in fact, was not wanting from the beginning of the human race." The lowest of extant cults has essential points of contact with higher ones, and thence with the great historical religions, including Christianity; and there is every reason to infer that

## 12 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

Religion has slowly developed from forms in the pre-historic past which certainly were not superior to the modern rudimentary examples. The lowest extant cults thus enable us to form some idea of the great evolution in the history of Religion. At the same time comparison shows that fundamental points of resemblance between the lowest and the highest types underlie the most fundamental of differences. Consequently, when we think of the evolution of religious thought it must be remembered that what has made for evolution, for growth, and for the existing differences, has also made for a certain identity and permanence. The factors we postulate for the development in the past cannot be severed from those which explain current and impending conditions : *e.g.* conceptions of a Supreme Being must not sever his part in the history of mankind from his activity at the present day.

Modern anthropological research, in throwing a flood of light upon past and present religious, social, legal, and other ideas, is laying the foundation for a more critical knowledge of human nature and the predominating tendencies of life and thought. It is thus of great practical value for the testing and improving of constructive schemes, the success of which demands some movement of thought. The fundamental resemblances which are everywhere found evidently point to something invariable in man, and warn us of limitations ; whereas the fundamental differences suggest the possibility of further development, provided the limitations are recognized. We may distinguish between (a) a relatively invariable substratum, kernel, skeleton, or background, and (b) that which is more external, changeable, fluctuating, and relatively variable ; and we can perceive that there is an obvious possibility of (b) new external forms of (a) underlying principles and ideas. The critical study that does justice to both resemblances and differences illuminates the nature of men who can, at the same time, profoundly differ from, and profoundly resemble, each other, according to the

particular evidence we employ. It follows from this that the more we are impressed by the similarities among men the more improbable that there will be a new psychical or mental development leading to the decay or disappearance of the fundamental religious ideas which are to be found in one form or another among the vast majority of men. On the other hand it follows equally that it is only to be expected that, as thought develops, Religion will develop, and that it will adhere to those general features that may be found to characterize all religions from the lowest to the highest. The modern tendencies, some diametrically antagonistic to all that has been distinctive of Religion, others keenly alive to the need for "reconstruction" or "reinterpretation," prove that if there is to be any coherence or harmony in the world of thought, a further development in the history of Religion is inevitable.

Since the vicissitudes of history testify to the futility of all schemes that for some reason or another did not appeal to the generality of men, the rational and "critical" individual will prefer to be guided by the fruits of experience, and will test all impulsive tendencies in the light of the accumulated knowledge of the past. The "critical" method of inquiry tests and balances opinions, and in paying attention to contradictory and contrary views is the antithesis of that dogmatism and false rationalism which assumes that its own position is complete, and that Truth lies with it alone, and has only to shine forth in order to dissipate the clouds of error and the mists of obscurantism. An attitude of patronage, contempt, or intolerance towards other positions that are regarded as inferior finds in *them* weak points and imperfections which some fresh impartial observer finds in *it*; and when it passes judgment it is implicitly fixing a standard by which *it* in turn can be judged. The "critical" inquirer must assume that people are intellectually as honest and sincere as himself. Man's common sense impels him to maintain



## 14 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

beliefs and practices which he sees no reason to modify or reject, and he usually prefers to retain an imperfect position rather than accept another which does not "appeal" to him. There are minds, intelligent, learned, and usually honest, which genuinely hold beliefs which are variously styled religious, supernatural, superstitious, or irrational, while other minds are genuinely unable to accept those beliefs which, to others, are the most real truths. The "critical" method is to treat the beliefs and ideas of others as we would that they should treat ours, to allow that they may hold them for reasons not very different from those that actuate us, and to assume that the disharmony in thought is due to *bona fide* differences in experience and knowledge.

Now, two opposing positions cannot each be right, and so long as the various departments of research and knowledge do not lead to unanimous conclusions, it is evident that an individual, however sincere, cannot be relying upon any unanimity of tested knowledge, but rather upon himself. Hence the popular rationalism of the day, for example, is not properly rational, because specialists are divided upon many fundamental questions, and it is "uncritical" to point only to those who are in harmony with oneself. The ordinary rationalist is, of course, influenced by the impressions made upon him by sundry evidence, and herein he illustrates the tendency of us all to assume an objective and rational basis for our sincerest convictions, and—often—to question the existence of such a basis in our opponents. We all of us tend to build into one single system our small amount of tested knowledge, and the great mass of the untested; but when we speak of the "cobbler sticking to his last" we are very ready to recognize the importance of this difference in others! For the study of Religion it is necessary to observe the tendency of man to blend into one whole his tested and untested knowledge, his own experience and that of others.

So seriously do all men differ that a "messenger from Mars" would find that every individual was holding various beliefs which another individual could, or did, stigmatize as irrational, absurd, superstitious, and the like. Value-judgments of this sort are futile in critical inquiry. Besides, scientific research has so uncompromisingly linked together all mankind that it is a better method to assume that all men are mentally or psychically more alike than unlike, than to proceed to classify them into separate mental or psychical types. To take an example. Modern knowledge makes it difficult for both the European and the Australian to think of a Heaven in the skies above him or of a Hell underneath his feet. But the comparative study of religions collects and compares all the various relevant beliefs, and enables us to sever (*a*) the kernel from (*b*) the several external forms (*cf.* p. 12). Hence we have (*a*) certain similar mental or psychical states, feelings, experiences and convictions of profoundest happiness and of profoundest misery and despair. These are (*b*) expressed in a great variety of ways, some of which are very familiar in Christian thought. Under certain conditions ideas of Heaven and Hell have been persuasive and effective, and the fact that the ideas take various external shapes and can even decay shows that they depend primarily upon psychical causes. Everyone will express his (*a*) experiences, impressions, and states in (*b*) the language and phraseology of his particular environment, and where necessary one must always distinguish between what is generally common to man as a thinking or psychical being and the more particularized and external forms of thought which develop, decay, and can be replaced by others. Hence, any assertion that particular ideas of Heaven and Hell are irrational and contrary to modern knowledge does not affect the underlying psychological aspect of the question, which is, indeed, the more fundamental.

One may ask: Are there really a Heaven and a Hell? Can the beliefs be reconstructed to harmonize with

## 16 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

modern knowledge? Or, leaving all controversial questions, we may satisfy ourselves by objective comparison: (1) that men have tended to entertain the beliefs, even in a form that to us of to-day may seem irrational; (2) that such beliefs have helped to regulate their life and thought; and (3) that they have been indisputably real and effective. In other words, they were *psychical* realities. Indeed, there were (a) psychical states which found so immediate an expression in (b) the beliefs and ideas of the environment that subject and object were as one; men found that their feelings were made explicit and real by the ideas: they experienced what the environment enabled them to describe as "heavenly" bliss or the despair of "hell." Again, we may leave the controversial questions of the objective existence of a Deity. Simple objective comparison reveals fundamental similarities in the ideas entertained of a supernatural being or beings, the enormous part they have played in thought and action, and the keen resentment caused even by the criticism of the ideas. In other words, the ideas are so effective and so underlie belief and behaviour, that the supernatural being can be called a *psychical* reality. Thus the study of human experience, its expression and its evolution, provides an objective foundation for the investigation of Religion: we deal with what men experienced and thought and what actuated their lives, as apart from any question of the rationality and validity of the ideas. Man's profoundest and most effective realities are primarily *psychical* realities, whether the individual be a mystic or a rationalist, a scientist or a religious devotee.

Now, it is true that arguments based directly upon the Supernatural are all-sufficing to many minds. But they do not appeal to those whose experience has been different, and the progress of Religion has always been stimulated in a very large measure by those who have been dissatisfied with current religious thought. Had the arguments from the Supernatural sufficed from the first, others would not have been needed, and the advance

of knowledge would assuredly have been exceedingly slow. Those who have objected to Religion—usually a particular religion—have not rarely served, however unintentionally, to make it more comprehensive in that they have compelled others to justify their inmost convictions in a way that satisfied the thought of the age. The comparison of religions shows that religious expression moves along with the general progress of thought. There is an interconnection between religious and other aspects of thought, between Religion and all ordinary knowledge. What has regulated the life and thought of men has been Religion, or a nucleus of profound feelings and thoughts that corresponded to a Religion. A living Religion always was and always must be in harmony with the profoundest side of the individual, and unless the latter is in harmony with current thought there is no harmony between him and his fellows. The aims of philosophy and the convergence of diverse departments of knowledge point towards an ideal state of harmony or coherence which, however, must satisfy the profoundest side of men: such is the interconnection of life and thought that the progress of thought in general and of Religion in particular is bound up with that of the individual and his entire environment.

A man's experience and knowledge determine his attitude to Religion, Science, &c., and consequently everything depends upon his position or attitude. If he thinks he possesses an absolute or final one, he forgets the absence of convergence of knowledge, and may thus hinder his further psychical development. In an inquiry, therefore, we distinguish between our present attitude, inevitably incomplete, and an ideal one, more complete. So, too, as regards the whole Universe, we may have an attitude dependent upon our entire world of thought, but there must be a far more complete one dependent upon the continued development of ourselves and of all the relevant knowledge in the world. Religion is an inseparable part of Life and Thought, and the problem of Life is to find an attitude which enables the individual

## 18 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

to make the most and the best of Life. But it is essential to remember that there is all the difference between the effort to find a solution and the desire to justify and otherwise substantiate such solution as we have already accepted.

Religion cannot be regarded as a separate entity ; as a part of a large interconnected whole, it is neither uninfluenced by Science, Politics, and other " parts " of Life and Thought, nor is it without influence upon them. Its history forbids the supposition that the psychical nature of man will be so different that he will cease to maintain the distinctive features of Religion, the varying external forms of which are not to be confused with their fundamental psychological aspects. The stability of every society depends upon a harmonious interrelationship of the profoundest ideas of all its members, and upon this depends coherence of Life and Thought. Such coherence is not due to arbitrary adjustment or artificial compromise, but it can be consciously striven for, by seeking a standpoint or attitude that shall answer the religious and other evidence. Such an attitude would effect a harmony without the exclusion of those features that at present preclude harmony. It would involve a re-expression of the most fundamental ideas in accordance with the best knowledge, and this would require a development of thought beyond the present stage, where the very striking and often disturbing differences in the total world of thought, due to the extreme complexity of life and knowledge, tend to obscure the psychical resemblances among all men.

## CHAPTER II

### THOUGHT AND ITS MOVEMENT

WHEN we speak of the "destruction" or "overthrow" of religious or other beliefs and ideas, and of the "building up" of new ones, we use metaphors of a misleading character; for though we tend to think of thought as a structure, it is rather something that grows, develops, and evolves. A "body" or system of beliefs, practices, and the like (*e.g.* Christianity), depends upon people; it is part of their larger total "body" of thought, and undergoes development. Consider any significant body of thought or position which is intimately bound up with some earlier name— $x$  (*e.g.* Mohammed, Luther, Kant, Spencer, Mill, Darwin, Marx, Cobden): any attack upon or refutation of  $x$  does not necessarily affect the present stage, because what was due to him is no longer in its original context; it is wrapped up with subsequent experience and knowledge, and if a man attacks your authority  $x$ , he has also *you* to deal with. A present stage may certainly be imperfect, but not necessarily so because of its earlier stages; and a scientist, for example, who acknowledged the indebtedness of his position to Darwin would more naturally tend to improve it than to accept the position held by an opponent who argued that Darwin's conclusions were incorrect or imperfect, and that consequently the subsequent stage was completely erroneous. Attitudes and positions have evolved in the history of religions, as in other fields of life, and though much may be due to the stimulus afforded by those who misunderstood, attacked, and repudiated them, the more comprehensive advances were due to those who could

## 20 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

sympathize, who saw the superior merits of the position, and who found that it offered a better answer to Life than that of the opponent. What has developed has been a view taken of the Universe which has enabled man to cope with Life. Subjectively, Religion was a life to be lived ; viewed objectively, there is a difference between the demands of the individual and the supply, and to confuse these is as wrong as to confuse the Truth that satisfies the individual (whether rationalist or mystic) with the absolute objective Truth.

Any careful study of the development of thought reveals the close relationship between successive stages despite the great landmarks that seem to sever them. As epoch-making landmarks we think of Darwin, the French Revolution, the Reformation, the rise of Mohammedanism, &c. Yet, every stage is the sequel of the preceding and the forerunner of the next ; everywhere there are antecedents and consequences, causes and effects. There is no break in the "genetic" series. So also, in the history of any man, such landmarks as conversion, marriage, bankruptcy, immigration, &c., do not obliterate the real interconnection between the before and after. There are no "leaps" in psychical evolution, provided we take a wider outlook or make a deeper analysis. And only thereby can we appreciate the significance of both the differences and resemblances. We gain a better view of the history of thought by enlarging our horizon and by associating with ourselves the rise and fall of the remote civilizations of Babylon or Palestine, Greece or Rome. This we do *instinctively* when we speak of the Dark or Middle Ages, of the Arrest of Enquiry, and of the Revival of Learning. Here we combine Western Europe, which had been slowly emerging from a state of barbarism, with the earlier civilizations in other lands ; we associate the rise and coming-of-age of Western Europe with the vicissitudes further east, as though the whole formed a single unit. Strictly speaking, the evolution of any aspect of thought (*e.g.* religion, philosophy), should not

be confused with the history of particular areas ; but our instinctive attitude is instructive, and, when we put aside some national or particularistic point of view, and think " universally " as it were, we have a grander impression of the significance of the inauguration of new conditions (*e.g.* the rise of Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism) as part of a world-wide process.

We cannot properly understand things (men, events, beliefs, practices) unless we view them in their context, in the whole of which they are part, in the light of the preceding and following stages. The ape and the man are remarkably alike—or unlike—it depends upon the particular group of details (resemblances *or* differences) ; and the only critical estimate will be based upon both groups of evidence, and will refer the ape and the man to their environments and to their place in evolution. So, too, a religion (*e.g.* Christianity) may have remarkable resemblances with other religions whether (1) now current, or (2) historically prior to it ; but it would be unwise to base an estimate upon those features alone or upon the differences alone. And if we proceed on these principles we must apply the same method to ourselves : what we condemn in others may be virtually identical with something in ourselves, and what we think meritorious in our friends may be found in our foes. The fundamental resemblances will be obscured because of the fundamental differences, or *vice versa*. And if we pursue this further and compare men who are warmly enthusiastic and keenly zealous, we should find most interesting points of resemblance, so that the fiery religionist and the violent rationalist would have certain fundamental *psychical* similarities although their bodies of beliefs and practices might differ fundamentally. *Cf.* above, p. 12 (foot).

To take other examples. All men tend to rely upon their own authorities while repudiating those to whom their opponents appeal ; it would be very difficult to find one who, however antagonistic to " Authority," had not one of his own ! So, also, men have a certain



## 22 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

similarity of attitude to their favourite personality—be he athlete, minister, politician, peer, president, or king. Our judgment depends upon our estimate of the particular authority or person, with the result that we are readily guilty of the sort of enthusiasm and respect that we condemn in others. But we must look abroad and observe the same essential features when the hero of civilized life is replaced by sacred individuals, spirits or saints. The psychical state tends everywhere to be more or less similar. The difference lies in more external considerations—the saint, the athlete, or the cabinet minister!—in the impression the phenomenon makes upon our particular body of thought.

The body of thought or synthesis determine the attitude to phenomena. A man's conceptions of Christianity, Socialism, &c., are such that any new relevant datum (a new idea, proposal, theory, &c.) will be judged in the light of this body. It is tempting to say that the body has a "skeleton," a "vital principle," or something that makes it "live," for, as everybody knows, we often feel that it would be destroyed if certain new ideas were to take effect. Religion, Christianity, and the Constitution have survived certain novel introductions which, at the time, seemed bound to shatter them; some people felt that the body of ideas implied by these terms could not stand the shock, and events proved that they were mistaken. We commonly feel that our "bodies" of thought (*e.g.* Darwinism, Non-conformity, Socialism, &c.) have a part or section—or whatever we may call it—which is vital; and since, in the course of history, religions, institutions, and the like have died, it is evident that the underlying "bodies" of ideas upon which they depended were vulnerable. To understand the significance of this we must observe that we are dealing with individuals; it is *they* who fight for the convictions, beliefs, and theories that seem to be essentially part of themselves. The development of a man's life and that of his total world of thought are interconnected; and since his profoundest and most

valued beliefs are not unchangeable, the most vital part of his psychical being and that of his world of thought are both capable of development. Each depends upon the other, and the whole evolves.

Often in course of discussion, of reading, or of thinking, a point is reached where a man is suddenly aware of a marked difference within himself. Some "depth" is sounded, some "inmost" part is touched, some more real or vital part is affected. Men will differ as to what is and what is not profound, but here are their profoundest things—their religion, or what corresponds to it or takes the place of it. "There is an inmost centre in us all, where truth abides in fulness." What we all feel to be most significant, most essential, and most real in our mental or psychical life is in some way connected with that "remoter" side of ourselves which we can describe only by metaphors. The ordinary sincere individual is guided by this side of himself rather than by any opposing opinion of Church and State; and just as he will reject the theology that does not touch this "depth," so also scientific, political, social, and legal ideas are in their turn subject to the same test. Whence it follows that any body of thought, in whatever form, out of touch with this side of man does not last, but if it lasts it is because it has in some way hitherto answered some need. Now we, when we survey the world of beliefs and behaviour, may see a distinction between (a) the sacred, holy, religious, profound, &c., and (b) all that is secular, profane, common, ordinary, and that does not come into the former class. But the difference we see between *a* and *b*, and the gulf we may fix between the sacred and the non-sacred, depends essentially upon the impression made by the phenomena upon our "remoter" or "deeper" self, that integral though little-known part of our self. This determines the practical difference between the supernatural and the natural, between the extraordinary and the ordinary; and consequently the gulf we see when we look objectively at *a* and *b* is neither so great nor so funda-

## 24 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

mental as we external observers are apt to imagine. The real difference rests within the individual and depends upon the profounder side of his self. The differences we feel in our states, in our existence as human beings, are of fundamental importance for the problem of man's place in the Universe.

A study of any far-reaching movement in history and thought reveals the general truth that the resultant conditions are due to *all* the individuals concerned. "Genius begins great works, but labour alone finishes them" (Joubert). The men who stand out conspicuously are indebted to the inconspicuous; every individual has been shaped by the current conditions and has helped to shape them, and they are the result of a *collective process*, due as much to the rank-and-file as to those of outstanding merit. If "the future works out great men's purposes," there is a difference between the goal as apprehended by the few and the actual conditions that result from the co-operation of the many. The most active and far-seeing cannot foresee the actual results of their plans or labours; and everyone who has aims is consciously working for them, but is more unconsciously contributing to subsequent conditions of the character of which he is ignorant. Yet it is very difficult to regard any sequence of events or any system of conditions as the *chance* result of the more deliberate strivings of innumerable men. Man is undoubtedly purposive: he feels that he has a part in making conditions: yet the process must be viewed as a collective one, due not to individuals, but to the mutual interdependence of individuals, and the interrelationship is indispensable.

If we regard ourselves as the instruments of a Process, we are clearly a part of it, and we usually feel ourselves to be free agents. Such a Process is something vaster and more permanent than man with his threescore years and ten. Men are thinking, working, and writing for a future they will not live to see, and instinctively they co-ordinate and synthesize their experience and

knowledge and thus develop psychically. They usually feel themselves to be *persons* that feel, desire and think, and, as a rule, the only Process that they can intelligently conceive is of a *personal* nature. The only cause of which a man has immediate knowledge is himself, and it is easier for him to think of a *personal* Power or Process at work in the Universe than of an impersonal one for which man has no analogy in his own experience. It is, of course, difficult to think of a personal Power outside persons, but man tends intuitively to recognize one. We all instinctively associate causes in Nature with the 'striving we experience in ourselves; we tend to speak of "natural" causes (*e.g.* natural selection itself) as though they were persons with will and aim, and under the influence of any strong emotion the most inveterate "naturalistic" conceptions tend to fall away. It is important, therefore, to notice that the fundamental problem is the meaning of "person" and "personality," of "individual" and "individuality." It is precisely his own Self that man has had to learn; we cannot think of ourselves as other than persons, yet we have not a full knowledge of our personal selves. Hence, the better the knowledge of the Self and of the psychical processes in man, the better could man think intelligently and effectively about the process in the Universe. The fullest knowledge of the process that works in the Universe involves the fullest consciousness of the Self.

Not only has man a remoter and profounder side of himself, but it is immeasurably vaster than the portion of his total thought in conscious play at any given moment. He may be deliberately reading a book, but the senses will be alert to irrelevant sounds, smells and sights. Disturbing thoughts now and again will come to the surface. Meanwhile the mind is classifying and co-ordinating the new impressions with the older ones; older problems take a new form, and "deep" down, the profoundest ideas, the character and the personality are subconsciously maturing. Although much remains

## 26 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

to be discovered of the subliminal, subconscious or unconscious part of ourselves, even the normal examples are wonderfully valuable. If we think or calculate more or less automatically, it is because the mind was trained; and only by discipline and attention will it do readily and easily what once required expenditure of thought and labour. An exhibition of spontaneous skill or ability, however impressive, has generally required a necessary preparation, and only by farther labour can the ability be enhanced. We may recognize (A) the more conscious part of ourselves and (B) the less conscious, (A) a conscious assimilation and activity, and (B) a less conscious process. B and B seem in some respects mechanical and automatic, but we cannot sever A and B or A and B. Both require a conscious exercise of control, because we are aware that B and B can temporarily gain the upper hand. When we say that a man was not himself, beside himself, or lost control of himself, we intuitively recognize (what is proved by analysis) that man has a more conscious and responsible side and a side less conscious, but vaster and profounder.

If we look back on our lives it is evident that a long time elapsed before we recognized the plans and purposes that now guide us. There seems to have been an unconscious preparation for every conscious activity; the conscious purpose at one stage was unconsciously preparing for another conscious purpose at the next. Indeed, increase of experience sometimes impresses us so vividly that we feel we had hitherto been relatively mechanical and unconscious; we "wake up" to life, although we know quite well we were not "asleep" before. We are not aware of our *whole* Self, yet its vicissitudes are as important as those of which we are actually conscious. If an individual has a serious accident, loses his intellect, and becomes insane, or if in his old age he becomes senile and childish, are we to suppose that the earliest dawn of mind, its ripening and the subsequent disaster—the whole series which we

could trace by simple observation—are the Alpha and Omega of his history? Now the way in which we can introspect, analyze, cross-examine ourselves and control our mind shows that our world of thought and we ourselves are not precisely one and the same. Moreover, there is reason to believe that our memory is fuller than we consciously realize, and that long-forgotten vicissitudes are not entirely removed from our complete consciousness. Finally, man has had the intuitive conviction that, bound up though he was with the haps and chances of the body, he was in a sense independent of and superior to it, and the intense consciousness of his existence and continuance has made the idea of an existence after death a “psychical reality.” The Self has a vaster kingdom than it imagines; but the Self is not the same as the kingdom which alone makes it a king: the Self is not identical with its psychical realm by which we know and test it.

The development of man as a psychical being brings problems of its origin and sequel. The young child is obviously able to profit from his environment, but, primarily, he is not self-conscious, and there can be no difference between A, *A* and B, *B* (see p. 26). There is something more than the surface indications by which we estimate him; and, as we follow him from birth to death, something develops and evolves, something over and above that of which either we or the individual himself are fully aware. These remarks bear directly upon our conceptions of Personality, Personal Power, and Process. What is effective is due to the interconnection of men (see p. 24). It does not rest upon individual “machines” or “nervous systems,” but upon an appropriate relationship between many. The cruder materialism overlooks this. The whole of which the individual is part involves the remoter, profounder, and unknown side of all the interconnected individuals concerned. Hence our conception of the Power or Process in the Universe already is seen to demand a knowledge far more complete than what is already

## 28 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

possessed, far superior though it may now be to that possessed by rudimentary races.

In every individual we see a development from the more instinctive and unconscious to the more conscious, intelligent, and purposive. ' It is a development wherein he gains a fuller consciousness of his possibilities and limitations ; he enlarges his environment, his world of thought, and he grows in knowledge of Self. There is the greatest difference between the earliest stages and the most recent ; but all the successive stages are interrelated. This is analogous to the evolution of the Universe, from the inorganic to the organic, from the appearance of Life to that of Intelligence. Everywhere there are very striking differences which would allow us to classify and isolate ; but we should require preliminary definitions (of matter, inorganic, organic, life, mind, instinct), and these may beg the question. On the other hand, the very striking resemblances in the successive and interrelated stages are like those that unite the infant, child, youth, and adult with the old man. What we see around us we divide and classify for present practical purposes, but the clear-cut differences we are obliged to make tend to obliterate the fundamental points of resemblance and obscure the overlapping of successive stages (*cf* pp. 10 *seq* , 20).

Evolution in the Universe culminates in the self-consciousness of man who is aware of the Universe and strives to comprehend it in its fulness. But the process in history cannot be viewed apart from current immanent processes. " Matter " is taking various forms, each going along lines proper to itself—crystal, jelly-fish, insect, tree, man, &c.—yet " matter " is ultimately something more subtle than what can be seen, touched, or weighed ; and though we are not aware of Mind as apart from body, our conception of Mind involves a collective process in all human minds (see p. 24). Further, unless we sever human mind from the " consciousness " of animals, from the ability of organisms to respond to stimuli, from the power of the crystal

to behave decently and symmetrically, as every proper crystal should do, and unless we are influenced solely by the differences, the human mind will invariably tend to co-ordinate and synthesize all its experience and knowledge. Either the differences in "matter" lead us to differentiate our conceptions of Powers and Processes; or unity of the conceptions of Power and Process tends to unify the material forms in spite of their present striking differences. For, if we take a sufficiently long and wide view the differences in the form of "matter" are relatively ephemeral; they may be transitory from the point of view of Eternity.

The mind instinctively tends to hold synthesizing ideas of permanence, continuity, and unity, whereby man normally rises above changes, and is not lastingly overwhelmed by accidents. The mind is very apt to ignore difference, growth, and development where they exist; but when it recognizes them it is very ready to exaggerate them and thus obscure the underlying connexions and interrelations. When the mind becomes conscious of the Universe, it becomes conscious of what was already in existence, but the gradual growth of mind makes it difficult for man to estimate his place in the Universe and his relationship to its processes. Just as our conceptions of Life will be based upon personal experience and knowledge, so our ideas of the Universe are not so much a description of it as the result of its significance for us. Our ideas thus tend to represent what we have come to understand, however imperfectly, in the course of our development—they are, in this way, our contribution to a less imperfect knowledge of what the Universe really is, of what that whole is of which we are a part. In this we are swayed by feeling and temperament, as also by intellect and reason.



## CHAPTER III

### THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS DEVELOPMENT

WE contrast the heart with the head, feeling with thought, faith with reason, insight and intuition with reflection, poetry with prose, speculation with induction, spontaneity with cautious circumspection, religion with science, all that is impulsive and instinctive with that which is deliberate, and the like. On the one side ( $x$ ) we place all that easily tends to the imaginative, the non-rational and the irrational, and on the other ( $y$ ) we find what pertains to reason and the rational. But  $x$  comprises what is elevated, stirring, and highly-developed, as well as what is open to objection; while as regards  $y$ , what is most rational and intellectual is only relatively so—it may be far removed from human interests, it is not rarely unsatisfying to life, and the march of knowledge shows how imperfect each stage in the past proves to have been. In other words, there can be no *a priori* assumption that the one or the other is necessarily good or bad. When we condemn or repudiate we are influenced by particular cases and forget how largely we are ruled by the non-rational and subconscious side of ourselves. Psychologically we cannot sever (save for some analysis) the feeling from the reflective side of man. From prehistoric man onwards the advance of thought has been due to the combination of  $x$  and  $y$ . In  $x$  we may have a greater fulness of existence, but it is precisely the exercise of reason and control that has made experience valuable. Life is interpreted through thought and then enriches thought; they move side by side, though thought is in arrear,

## THE INDIVIDUAL AND DEVELOPMENT 31

reflecting upon experience, and making a wider and deeper synthesis which will interpret new experience.

Broadly speaking, we may say that  $\alpha$  is characterized by the diminution or absence of control, by a manifestation of the *whole* Self, by existence and life, rather than by reflection and thought. But when we reason, we concentrate upon particulars, we "specialize" and ignore what *seems* irrelevant. Increase of knowledge comes by attention to a small portion of some whole that presents itself. The full significance of an impression always depends upon the knowledge of the individual. At an early stage our knowledge was excessively small; impressions aroused feelings rather than thoughts. Control of attention ( $y$ ) is necessary for all progress. Man does not feel that his uncontrolled Self is his true and ideal Self. The ideal may be remote, but certainly is not thought to be unattainable; it is a controlled Self, depending upon general guiding principles, co-ordination of ideas, and mastery over disturbing impulses. There is always a tendency to repudiate the non-normal state when, as we afterwards say, we were "not ourselves." The non-normal state is not necessarily "higher" or "lower" or "abnormal"; it is a highly significant aspect of ourselves, and the feeling (*e.g.* temper, joy, enthusiasm) is more profound and intense than in the nearest corresponding normal state. It is part of our development, intensely real at the time; but on reflection it seems too removed from normal life; it is not the sort of Self that is suitable for everyday existence. Yet it is to be reckoned with, because it is a state of existence or being, not one into which we actually develop, but one which in course of our development can be made richer and more valuable. The non-normal state is an indication of something more profound than the everyday normal life, but it is not controlled; and while the exercise of control tends to shape our individuality, it tends thereby to sever us from our fellows.

We may regard a man as a unit in course of a very

## 32 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

wonderful, psychical development. But he is one of, and he depends upon, myriads of similar units. Progress comes from the activity of numerous individuals ; the environment checks those who diverge too seriously : it criticizes, hinders, moderates, and adjusts their plans. The environment gives us our stock of general knowledge. The great men are those who impressed the environment ; it recognized their worth, and hence we praise and revere them. The environment moves by a kind of "collective" process ; it has a large mass of average opinion, and those too much outside it will suffer. "The voice of the people is the voice of God"—the saying indicates the impression made by the "collective thought," although we tacitly apply it only to those cases where we feel it to be appropriate. The modern study of social psychology has strongly emphasized the immense importance of the social body and its collective thought which is imposed upon the individual, and consequently the individual, as an integral part of his social group or environment, may be regarded as a unit, part of some larger unit.

Now, when a man associates himself with others, he says "we," not "I." "I" live only a few decades, but the larger unit is less transitory, whether we refer to school, club, town, country, or empire. "Our" land and its history form a unit which carries us far away in space and time, and when we talk of the Middle Ages we instinctively associate ourselves with those of Ancient Greece and Rome who contributed to the development of the present conditions (see p. 20). We may speculate whether the dead are interested in our problems, or whether we, when dead, shall be interested in the conditions we are making ; but unconsciously we weld into one whole the past and the present, and we both identify ourselves with those who made the past, and we fight in order to make the future. And, biologically, on the theory of the common descent of all mankind, an instinct of unity is not unnatural ! Our unit, however, is not constant. The feeling of "we" and "our"

varies; it depends upon our sympathies, our land and its history and extent; it depends upon our feelings, ideas, and knowledge of things. Instinctively we claim to be part of a larger unit, a larger existence, which must needs be formulated in order that the significance of the instinct may be realized.

A man who stands up against common opinion sets himself against the collective thought. Even among savage peoples there are men of individuality, and all such men in diverging from the environment stand psychically outside the group. Such a term as "collective thought" usefully symbolizes the homogeneity of a group, and there is abundant evidence for its force. But other evidence, equally impressive, shows us men striving to influence their environment, and though they suffered because it was antagonistic, they felt themselves to be in the right. Sociological explanations of the phenomenon may transfer the problem from the man to the group, but the secret lies outside the visible group. However large the group, however impressive its solidarity, when the individual diverges the unit is expanded and can be expanded indefinitely. What is fundamental is not man's conception of his fellow-men, but something over and above them, whether it be in his conception of himself or of a superhuman Power. Every idea of a Power in man must be extended outside the "environment," "group," or "society," and, if thought is to be co-ordinated, the unit of which man is part must be the largest conceivable. The mind cannot accept as its ultimate unit one that does not include all men, nor can it sever itself from all that influences it. The unit must be the whole of which a man feels himself part, and it must not be limited by his particular knowledge at a particular date. His knowledge of the whole develops as he develops, and the complete unit—the Universe—he can fully comprehend only when he has completed his development (*cf.* p. 25)

When ideas of a Supreme Being are presented to a man he tests them in the light of his body of thought

### 34 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

as it then is. "A man only understands what is akin to something already existing in himself" (Henri Amiel). The child has his instinctive activities, and observation shows that his ability to assimilate experience and knowledge depends upon the stage already reached. Especially significant is his ability to assimilate the things that "appeal to his heart," as we say, rather than to his head: to accept fruitful ideas, valuable truths, and simple religious teaching. There is a certain readiness to assimilate what, in a sense, belongs to the "supernatural" (religious ideas, fairies, spirits, and the like), and to share in an existence which may be said to be more psychical than physical (as, *e.g.*, in "make-believe"). It is true that time will modify these ideas, or perhaps remove some or all of them; but while increase of experience and knowledge may seriously affect ideas of the supernatural, there is throughout an active development of the Self. A man will feel that he must be true to himself, and must work and fight for his valued ideas as he would for any valued material object. But a man will also be conscious of a transcendent superior Power, immediately interested in his development, ready to help and to warn, a Power to be approached and worshipped. The consciousness of Self is no less a problem than that of the consciousness of a Supreme Power—both are psychical realities. A man works out a career to which he had been drawn at a time when he was ignorant of the possibilities, and such is the profundity and value of the subconscious side of man that it is little wonder that men of all ages and lands have believed in guardian spirits or angels, in tutelary deities and protective geniuses. The mystery of the developing Self involves intricate psychological questions which, when co-ordinated with the comparative study of religious beliefs, bear upon the problem of the recognition of a Deity. If the man in course of years comes to realize his Self, he clearly becomes aware of something of which he had already been part; while the possibility of an intimate and immediate relation-

ship with a Deity who had always been interested in the Self is characteristic of Religion.

Increase of experience and knowledge may enrich the "natural" at the expense of the "supernatural"; it takes the extraordinary and marvellous and makes it ordinary or even commonplace. It strips Religion. But we have not yet reached the bed-rock of fact. Man has frequently associated rain and crops with the supernatural; but although we may give a "natural" description of the rain and of the growth of corn, there are ultimate questions which are connected with unsolved problems of Energy, Personal or Impersonal Powers or Processes, Purpose and Mind. Whereas man has from time to time been able to co-ordinate his ideas of Nature and his experience of the Universe, modern knowledge scarcely allows us to do this to-day. But if knowledge based upon scientific research formed one synthesis with the experience and knowledge of the ordinary individual, man would once more associate the blessings of the earth with the supernatural. A man's recognition of the existence and providence of the Deity depend upon his body of experience and thought. Now, although increase of knowledge may seem to enrich (a) the "natural" and the "secular" at the expense of (b) the "supernatural" and the "sacred," we must not suppose that the contents of *b* are passing over and enriching *a*. The process in question has always been going on, and it is significant that not only does Religion persist and develop, but there is apt to be a recrudescence of very undesirable types of supernaturalism. The difference between *a* and *b* depends more upon the individual as a whole than upon the quantity of knowledge he possesses (*cf.* p. 23). If we could imagine a comprehensive system of thought based upon *a*, it would satisfy only a very limited number of individuals, and indeed it would not nourish them unless it satisfied the whole man. But where there is a comprehensive and co-ordinated body of thought in an environment, there is that which feeds the profounder

## 36 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

side of man, and experience and knowledge are in a certain harmony, uniting the religious and the non-religious aspects. Religion, so far from being founded upon the gaps in knowledge, is seen, when living, to permeate all life and thought. This is why when we start from *b* all seems to be part of one body of religious thought, whereas when we work from *a* everything seems "natural," and the necessity for Religion seems to disappear. None the less, however "natural" the Universe may appear, no one would deny the value of those generous sentiments that actuate men and make them lovable, or of that admiration for Nature which cannot be suppressed, or of those subconscious promptings which lead men to work out their lives and build better than they know. Man does not live by knowledge alone, but knowledge gives greater richness to Life, and the exercise of reason alone produces permanent advances and reveals to man his significance for the evolution of the Universe.

A comprehensive and co-ordinated body of thought combines in one whole that which satisfies the whole of the ordinary individual and allows him

To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a Heaven in a wild flower.

It is this ideal of a systematization of experience and knowledge, harmonizing all that goes to make up the Universe, that inspires Tennyson's familiar lines :

Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies.  
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but if I could understand,  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE UNIVERSE

MAN instinctively resents opposition ; he prefers others to agree with him. The more the agreement the more complete the harmony, but at the cost of that individuality and of that conflict of ideas and aims which has led to the increasing richness and complexity of the world of thought. In rudimentary societies variance of thought is relatively very small, and in higher levels, where there is some equilibrium or co-ordination of thought, the divergence is relatively smaller than that at periods of transition where individuality tends to be extreme. Now the young child in course of growth manifests with increasing intensity the fact that he has an individuality of his own. But in times of great joy, grief, fear, enthusiasm, or expectation—at times when he is not quite normal, or on non-normal occasions—his distinctive individuality is more vividly expressed (*e.g.* in a bad temper) or suppressed (*e.g.* in comradeship and unselfishness). The Self is expanded either for itself or for others. All non-normal occasions disturb and deflect the stream of life, and characteristically bring a need for contact with others. Great disasters, stirring occurrences, and even humorous events tend to force a co-operation and relationship, however temporary. Man is both social and selfish ; on occasion he tends to throw off all acquired convention and restraint, as though the psychical unity of all men broke down the differences that were due to the growth of individuality. But any tendency to repress the Self is making for homogeneity, and this would make ultimately for an inconceivable state of stagnation ; whereas



## 38 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

normally we tend to assert ourselves, and this makes for development, richness, and diversity, and for a heterogeneity which, if excessive, would lead ultimately to an inconceivable state of chaos. Something keeps mankind between the two extremes, just as the "collective process" moderates and adjusts the more excessive activities of individuals. Not the tendency towards heterogeneity but that towards homogeneity is obviously the more essential; not continued change but the exercise of control is the more significant factor for the harmonious evolution of the Universe (cf. p. 12, foot).

The men passing to and fro in the next street are heterogeneous, but if they were united for a time we should find some suppression of individuality and of reason, a certain contagiousness of feeling, and some manifestation of a collective spirit. A crowd when united is remarkably open to suggestion, and when one or more individuals command its attention and control it, the homogeneity becomes astonishing. He who is controlling seems to have almost unlimited powers: while he who, for the time being, is controlled seems to be an insignificant fraction. We may regard the whole as a psychical unit, of variable size, the predominating part of which is taken by one or more, who are not separate from or above the rest, but a superior part of them, the reflective and guiding part of a whole. The relationship is familiar, subtle, and suggestive. Sympathetic minds tend to a unity, at all events, in certain particulars, and the union gives a greater emotional strength. The teacher's success depends upon the relationship he can establish with his pupil. We, as persons, have to control our little world of "individual" ideas and thoughts, and when we put our "whole self" into a job the controlling part stands to the rest of us like the leader to his band. Not to delay further, here is a *normal* psychical relationship which enables us to form some notion of a psychical unit composed of separate individual parts, but with one controlling mind: mind working upon mind.

Morally and intellectually the crowd is not upon a very high level; but a moral and intellectual homogeneity or harmony as regards certain particulars would be found in groups with similar aims—*e.g.* political, social, charitable or intellectual. Every group which depends upon the “corporate spirit” animating its members must discountenance individuality that diverges to a degree felt to be dangerous to its stability; but the psychical unity will be primarily departmental, specialistic and confined to particulars. The individual, however progressive, usually appreciates homogeneity, provided he is on the ruling side; otherwise an instinctive self assertiveness manifests itself against those who, after profiting from the development of their own individuality, are repressing that of others, perhaps with the best intentions in the world. Among the lower orders the homogeneity or harmony is more complete. The bee or the ant is practically a fraction of a unit; and the homogeneity and differentiation in a hive of bees or a colony of ants would be inconceivable in man because his environment is too complex and mutable. In love there may be an almost perfect homogeneity with retention of individuality and scope for further development, but we obviously cannot imagine such a state on an unlimited scale among the whole of mankind. Yet such are the tendencies to combination and homogeneity on the one side, and to differentiation and heterogeneity on the other, that they are unintelligible and meaningless unless they suggest a state of equilibrium where every individual, as a result of his psychical development, might have the fullest realization of his individuality. And this is comparable only with the conviction of a state of Oneness with a Supreme Being, with a God who is Love, an idea which in various forms recurs independently in man at various levels of thought.

Individuality and Personality depend on control. A man may be “carried away” by a book, a play, an address, or by his thoughts; his life seems richer and

## 40 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

fuller ; his experience may seem real at the time, but he is not his normal self. He is in a psychical " kingdom " which is his very own ; he is not so much aware of it, as of it and in it. Like a man in love, he is not so much consciously and objectively aware that he is in a certain state, rather is he living a new life and existence. It is imperative that he restrain undue criticism, nor must he lose himself entirely ; his individuality is not gone, it seems to be expanded and to share in another or a larger existence. But when he sleeps and dreams he is a puppet ; something uncontrolled now controls him. The vicissitudes are often more disturbing and distressing than when he is awake, because he usually cannot reflect and adjust himself to the environment. Awake, he may strive to be his ideals, but dreaming, he is—what his dream makes him. He is a pawn in a very realistic game, even though he dream himself a king. When awake, the more complete his experience and knowledge the more intelligent, effective ; and realistic the constructions of his imagination. The novelist may see and hear the characters he has created, and there is always a tendency to give *material* reality to what is really only a *psychical* reality. In pathological cases a man may so lose control that he is and acts that which had in some way vividly impressed itself upon his mind. Thus there is a tendency to be in a real or a seemingly real manner what exists in the mind in the form of ideas—to be what one wants to be, to be what has become exceedingly interesting, to experience one's ideas and realize one's thoughts, to subordinate the material and the physical to the psychical and the spiritual. In the uncontrolled state everything is exceeding real, and we gain a vivid notion of the mysteries and marvels of the mind, and of the way in which, on occasion, the difference between the subject and the object can fade away. But it is evident that safety lies in the exercise of control and reason, and though these may seem to hamper life, they enrich the mind and make its fruits more valuable.

"Nature" appears to cherish the rank-and-file; those too much above or below the average suffer. Extreme individuality, like extreme obsession, tends to sever a man from his environment and may harm him. At the same time, extreme self-consciousness and morbidity are relieved when a man ceases to be dreadfully sorry for himself, when he puts aside himself and thinks of others. "There is joy in self-forgetfulness" (Helen Keller). The objective worth of the individual lies in his contribution to the environment. The non-normal states, temperaments and intellects, have a real value of their own, but they are not invariably suitable for everyday life. Religion, poetry, music, art, philosophy, research, reforming ideals—like "love in a cottage"—may be exceedingly stimulating to those concerned, but they become more objectively valuable when they are attuned to the ordinary world. The non-normal will take man away from the rough-and-tumble of life to a larger and grander existence, but the objective development of thought comes through intelligent adjustment with a larger field of thought. The subjectively profound is not objectively so until it has been made intelligible to a larger variety of minds and temperaments. Thereby it is enriched and is of more comprehensive and more permanent utility; and the individual who will make the adjustment is developing his own existence less specialistically and more comprehensively. The great seers, prophets, and inaugurators of new religions benefited the environment which succeeded in adjusting them to itself, and thereby tended to work out its own career even as they had done. What seems to be a deterioration between the teaching and ideals of the individual and the subsequent adjustment by the environment represents the latter's gain. After all, the greatest geniuses are the most indebted men. The vast and incalculable difference between the average thought of to-day and that of the first prehistoric society is due to a very gradual movement influenced by myriads of individuals each of

## 42 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

whom, in working out his own aims, has contributed something, and whose value has not always lain where he thought. Those who diverged from the rest and followed out their own ideas have caused a development of ideas of righteousness and good, of sin and of evil ; and the most moderate of "progressive" ideas are not essentially different from those that actuate the most anarchistical and revolutionary of men.

The environment has often misjudged the individual ; the fairer estimate has been made afterwards when the consequences of his work have been perceived. A man's real value is seen to lie in that which is effective for a later stage of development. Now, what a man feels to be profound for himself must be translated into action. He may study principles and methods, and he may look back and ask whether he has practised them ; but when he is actually at work he does not continuously cross-examine himself and introspect and scrutinize his steps. He advances by being subconsciously assisted by what he has more consciously and laboriously assimilated ; and the aim of all training and discipline is to hand over as much as possible to the subconscious, automatic, and mechanical side, and thus leave more scope for the conscious, reflective, and purposive side. A man may believe that on a certain occasion he acted up to his very best and truest Self, but he did not make that judgment at that very time. Though on retrospect he feels he *was* that Self then, he does not now experience this Self, nor does he feel that he has reached the limit of development. There is still a "psychical gulf," the need of a development towards some higher Self, to be achieved not by contemplation but by activity. If death might seem to destroy that development, the normal instinctive or intuitive feeling has been that the development of man does not cease with death. The Self is not quite the same as the ordinary stumbling and erring man which it must guide and control.

The really effective things do not die. We are

thoroughly accustomed to the fact that groups, institutions, countries, subjects of research, and everything that depends on individuals, survive most catastrophes. Men die, but we invariably assume the persistence of the activities connected with them and the survival of the ideas they introduced. The continuity of the stages in the life-history of man is so impressive that the mind does not naturally imagine that death means annihilation. The real worth of a man is so invariably seen only when we take a broader view of the events with which he was connected that we cannot properly estimate the individual aright by confining ourselves to our imperfect survey of his short years. The simplest organisms can hardly be said to die, the more complex disintegrate, but something is indestructible. The death of the bee or the ant is not catastrophic because they are only fractions of a unit, and the man in like manner is not only part of a larger permanent unit, but instinctively and intuitively recognizes this. It is very difficult for the mind to believe that whatever evolves or develops stage by stage can suddenly be annihilated; only by taking a very narrow view, and by ignoring the whole of which a thing is part, can annihilation or even a radical change seem possible.

In all ages and lands men have felt that death would not remove them from their environment, that they would exist or be present perhaps in some new form, or perhaps absorbed in some larger unit. There have been converging intuitive convictions (1) that there is an existence after death not radically different from the experiences, scenes, and vicissitudes of the bodily life, and (2) that the dead are near and interested in the lives of their descendants, or (3) that the welfare of the former even depends upon the behaviour of the latter. The essential difference between Life or the Living, and Death or the Dead, is what we decide it to be. Death is not terrible; "the terror," says Epictetus, the old Greek philosopher (first century A.D.), "consists in our idea that death is terrible." It is characteristic of

## 44 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

Religion to link the two together, not primarily as a philosophy or dogma, but as an intuitive and instinctive conviction of man's relation to the past, present, and future of his environment. Only rarely has annihilation been anticipated. The theory that death is an endless sleep forgets that this will be annihilation unless the Self subsequently "wakes up," as it were, and becomes aware that it has experienced sleep! A consciousness of continuity is indispensable, and the theory that the individual loses his individuality in another vaster one or in some ultimate principle is ambiguous if it does not deal with the question of the recognition of continuity. These theories, like the ideas of rebirth, reincarnation, transmigration, and the like, are more instructive as instinctive feelings that death is not annihilation, than for the intelligibility of their speculations. If A dies and is reborn in B, unless A is aware that he survives, or B becomes aware that A survives in him, A has certainly suffered annihilation. And if A survives in B we have still the problem of the relation between the inexperienced B and the far more experienced A; and the question of A's influence over B is exactly analogous to that of the influence exercised by a Supreme Mind upon every individual. The theological and the non-theological problems are similar and are equally important.

The instincts of self-preservation are beneficial to the subject; but the impulse that sends men to self-sacrifice is unintelligible and irrational if death is the end of all. Yet men instinctively commend self-sacrifice, and as instinctively abhor and fear suicide, and the difference which is felt has been for the benefit of the race. The intellectualistic arguments against the continuity of the individual have never prevailed against the subjective experiences of individuals and against the more objective fact of the instinctive tendency of man to regard himself as only part of a more permanent unit. This instinct leads men to work for conditions and ideals they will never see in the flesh and in a future

beyond their bodily life. Strenuous arguments against individual immortality not only have the beneficial effect of impelling others to justify their convictions more in accordance with the best thought of their time, they also reflect the subconscious feeling that man's interest in the history of the Universe is not limited to his few decades. Why should I trouble to argue against immortality if death is the end of all things, or if thenceforth I have no interest in this world! Moreover, the arguments are obviously not based upon personal experience; nor are they based on scientific grounds, because science cannot inquire into the future life; nor are they strictly and absolutely rational, because the knowledge of the age is too disparate. On the other hand, when the experience and knowledge of any environment are co-ordinated, the persistence of some psychical part of the individual after death has seemed only "natural."

The convictions of immortality are not some "happy thought" or "refuge of despair" invented to give solace to life; such a notion is mischievous and uncritical. Not only are they fundamental and "structural," directing and regulating other beliefs and practices, but they are of a sort that could not be invented and certainly could not persist unless they found a response. It is of course true that the convictions may take a very strange form. For example, we may find the belief that a man may appear after death in the shape of a serpent or a bird. But we must distinguish (a) the underlying belief in some continuity from (b) the particular form the belief takes. Primarily, b demands a, it is only one of a large variety of beliefs, all of which imply the kernel a (cf. pp. 12, 15). Much nonsense has been written about curious and quaint "survivals" simply because it was not realized that the data presupposed certain underlying ideas which elsewhere reappear in a form more in touch with modern civilized thought. Superstition and Religion are psychologically related, but the former term is applied properly to



## 46 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

ideas out of harmony with the thought of the environment. Religion cannot tolerate superstition, and rightly, and the attitude of critical sympathy it must take is that of all research which is neither too intellectualistic and cold, nor irrationally sympathetic and credulous.

Now sympathy is a highly significant trait. The sympathetic individual must lay aside some control, give a little rein to the feelings, depart from a purely objective and reflective position, and attempt to see phenomena in their own light. In studying history one endeavours to get into the situation, realize it, and follow the human interests. In scientific research, if we would follow a process or movement, it is no less necessary to put one's self into the heart of the object and know it, as it were, from within. To quote the old sage Plotinus (third century A.D.): "Like is known only by like, and the condition of all knowledge is that the subject should become like the object." Sympathy adds to knowledge, and is itself thereby made wiser; it sinks itself into the object but does not lose itself therein under risk of losing the control that makes for individuality. To try and "think" child is in a sense to "be" child; but there is a vast difference between the childlike and the childish. The objective increase of knowledge corresponds to a subjective psychical development, which must not be too "departmental"; for, just as a man's work and his general character are interconnected, so, unless the development be alike both moral and intellectual, the tendency towards a complete development is impeded. This has always been so in the evolution of thought, and morality in man finds its parallel in the lower orders. Irrational sympathy would suppress all that makes and has made for development: it is ignorant and intolerant, if not irreligious; but when rational it tends towards the ideal where feeling is under the control of knowledge and compassion is based on comprehension. The completest knowledge and the completest sympathy are

mutually dependent; the intellectual side cannot be severed from the moral, and we cannot consider the normal tendencies of the development of the individual apart from the profoundest and vastest problems of the Universe.

Human personality is a mysterious thing. Man's responsibility is not merely to his neighbours, it is also to himself, as part of that larger unit of which all are integral portions. There is no absolute difference between the highest and the lowest of men, or between life and death, or even between the divine and that which is not divine (see p. 29). Man is part of a larger whole, his knowledge of which increases as he increases comprehensively. Now, just as his many instinctive and other tendencies incline to be harmful when uncontrolled and undisciplined, so his most excellent traits may be injurious through lack of reason. It is an extremely thankless but thoroughly necessary duty to bring the schemes—and the dreams—of the zealous reformer to the light of reason. More so, when Religion is concerned, is this duty indispensable; for, if that which is highly appreciated because of the profound impression it makes upon us, remain untested, and fall below the level of the best thought, the further evolution of Religion itself is thereby impeded. Man is in the closest touch with the realities of the Universe, but his intuitions, however stirring and impressive, must be submitted to the judgement of Thought; only thereby have the higher religions risen above the lower ones.

## CHAPTER V

### THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE SUPERNATURAL

OF all spontaneous, intense, and uncontrolled psychical states the most remarkable are those that can be classed together as "mystical." Mysticism has different aspects according as the mystic is emotional, devotional, nature-loving, intellectual, philosophical, &c. Although the mystical phenomena differ in content and value, it is impossible to find any perfectly objective division or classification. The mystics are essentially akin. But the Christians resemble one another more than they do the Jews, and both have more in common than those to whom the Old Testament is not a Sacred Book. Those who adhere to the great positive religions are more akin than the pantheists, and all these could be viewed apart from the purely philosophical. The mystic may perhaps be said to experience the unity underlying all things, to be in a state of oneness with a whole, or of complete harmony with a transcendental order, or to realize in himself the ultimate reality of all things. He approaches very very nearly, if he does not feel he is one with, the most profound, supreme, and ultimate principle which lies beneath the thought of his environment. Mysticism is an intensely non-normal form of what is more normal in ordinary Religion, a more comprehensive form of absorption which is more normal in smaller "departmental" matters where control is laid aside (see p. 40). Even the truths that the mystic gains, like all religious inspiration, cannot be psychologically severed from inspiration in poetry, art, literature, or even from those mysterious and

striking ideas or solutions that suddenly break in upon the ordinary individual and astonish him.

Some of the greatest seers and thinkers of the world have been mystics, and mysticism has been responsible for the sublimest spirituality and the most cherished of truths. But it has distinctly harmful and dangerous aspects. If mystics have tended to see some inner spiritual meaning where the common mind sees only the material shell, they have also seen mystery because of their ignorance. They must needs express their experience in terms of the current thought; and if they tend to be somewhat incomprehensible, they freely admit the inadequacy of current language. Hence the effort is made to adjust language to experience, and language consequently bears witness to experience (*cf.* p. 10), although its imperfections are still felt as keenly by the mystic as by the lover, and the lover of nature. The mystic's profoundest thoughts have for him an objective validity; the questioning and criticism of them are resented. But such is the variation among the mystics of the various religions—and apart from them—that they cannot be said to give us absolute objective truth. The experience may be felt to be perfectly absolute; but just as the man who has been in love several times feels that each occasion was the "real thing," so the mystic, a human being, has obviously not reached the limits of psychical development. The more he is in touch with current thought, the more powerful his appeal; and the more ideally complete the thought and knowledge of his environment, the more complete his experience and the wider his appeal to different minds. But when the mystic finds his greatest authority within himself, when he confuses himself with what is mirrored in him, he tends to become a law unto himself; he is harmful to himself and his followers, a stumbling-block to the weak and the indiscriminating.

Mysticism often appears as a protest against excessive formalism and intellectualism. It fights against tendencies to delimit Religion or to force an abdication

## 50 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

of thought in favour of absolute faith. But it verges on the vague, the intangible, and the irrational. If it comes in to thwart the tendencies that would sever God and man, it tends to ignore that man is still man; if it would bring God and man near together, it has at times sunk the divine in the human. Because mystical and ecstatic experiences seem to furnish immediate and absolute Truth, it can be forgotten that, since they are expressed in terms of current thought, they are indebted to what has been slowly and laboriously hammered out in the general advance of thought. If mysticism holds out hopes of a direct source of inspiration, the all too-familiar fact was long ago well observed by Plotinus, that "to seek to rise above intelligence is to fall outside it." From the psychological point of view the mystical state or temperament is not peculiar to any age or land; consequently (a) on low levels we may find all the vivid and impressive characteristics of mysticism in a crude or lowly form, and (b) any appearance or recrudescence of mysticism, however impressive, must be estimated critically, i.e. intellectually, lest it be below the level of the highest development of ethical and all other thought.

Mysticism is significant for Religion, because it reveals the most fundamental part of man. It is an "awareness," varying in intensity and in expression; and it is persuasive, because all men have a profounder side waiting to be touched, as surely as everything that appeals to us is something to which we were already prepared to respond (cf. p. 34). Certainly, mysticism appeals to those who repress control and are influenced by feeling, but the intellect plays a part, and every mystic must always be in some measure judged by the intellect. If the intellect would seem to weave a covering over the "remoter depths" of man, the mysticism that is in touch with the intellectual thought of the age can rend it asunder. Mysticism, then, will vary in lands and ages. Among rudimentary peoples there is, on occasion, a feeling of the closest intimacy with the object of their profoundest and most real beliefs, while on

higher levels men have felt the experience of a veritable communion with the Divine. Says Eckhart, the old German philosopher and mystic (thirteenth century): "God and I are one in the act of my perceiving Him." But, in the words of John Smith, the Cambridge Platonist (seventeenth century): "Such as men themselves are, such will God Himself seem to them to be." In all Religion man's knowledge of God is limited by his capacity to understand Him; increase of knowledge permits a greater knowledge of God, and the more the individual develops comprehensively, the nearer does man approach the realities of the Universe. Mysticism viewed generally, with ecstasy, occultism, and the like, mingles the inferior and earthly with the sublime and spiritual; we estimate from our body of thought both the phenomena of mysticism and any discussion of it. Where we are most keenly touched, it seems almost blasphemous to speak of the phenomena as of other than divine origin; where they are most displeasing it seems as blasphemous to mention them in the same breath with the others. Here are the most fundamental psychical realities for man's conception of himself, of God and of the Universe, so real that those who experience them can with difficulty view them objectively.

There must needs be an adjustment between ordinary life and the mystical, religious and related experiences; there is the usual conflict between experience and reflective formulation, between the "being" and the "thinking" (*cf.* p. 30). In everyday life a man may have so deep a feeling of his own value that he will take a perverse view of things; and the environment, which instinctively respects him who believes in himself, as instinctively disapproves of excessive egotism, thus insisting upon the value of other individualities. In mystical, as in all religious experience, the individual gains a deeper realization of himself, often with unsettling or disturbing effects; and it is not easy for him to recognize that the objective value of the experience lies in its effects upon his relation to the environment (*cf.* p. 41).

## 52 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

His psychical development is vitally affected. Sometimes the individual feels his own littleness and unworthiness in the exceeding nearness of an ineffably grand and supreme Reality. But at other times he does not realize that there is still a profound gulf between him and the Ultimate. Mysticism, like Religion, may make a man more humble, or more self-assertive; even as men of more exceptional ability are the more unassuming or the more egotistic. The awareness or consciousness of privilege is not always followed by a recognition of what is involved. "He who ceases to kneel before the Divine wisdom," says James Martineau, "soon talks superciliously of the human, and ends with the worship of his own."

When one is conscious of a "psychical gulf" (p. 42), further development may lead to a feeling that it has been bridged. Sometimes man has a sense of disappointment, self-complacence, or aggressiveness when, on fuller knowledge, the psychical difference seems to have disappeared. On the other hand, development may still continue, some psychical gulf remains, and fuller knowledge only increases the appreciation of the object in all its manifold relations. Everyone is familiar with the transition from an attitude that recognizes the psychical superiority of another to that where the attitude is rather of one's own superiority. The transition may also be illustrated by the individual's attitude to the human object of his or her profoundest and most cherished thoughts. At first some psychical gulf is recognized, but subsequently (*e.g.* after marriage) the gulf may be bridged, the psychical difference that attracted and stimulated is obscured. On the other hand, although both parties may develop, some psychical difference may still remain, and this will stimulate further development. The problem of finding a proper attitude where there is a psychical gulf recurs in life as in Religion; and observation of human relationships is suggestive, in that Religion is characterized by the experience or the conviction of a Supreme Being,

immensely superior, but in some immediate and sympathetic relationship with the individual.

Men have declared their inability to sever their own activities from God's working in them, and frequently there have been those who have not necessarily claimed, but have been freely attributed, a close association, when not a virtual identification, with the Divine. There are psychical states which are inwardly felt to bring the individual very near the Divine; there have been men who have aroused the conviction in others that they were more divine than human. This exceeding nearness of God and Man has found innumerable forms of expression. It is of the first importance for any conception of the psychical nature of man; since, if man does not recognize a supreme transcendent Power in the Universe, he may find some wonderful Power inherent in human beings or in himself. Now, on psychological grounds the mystical and all related experiences are not to be confined to any single age or land, and they will express themselves variously according to the belief and custom of the individual's environment. It is exceedingly significant, therefore, that a reverent and humble attitude in man is emphasized in many different ways all the world over. If we consider man's attitude to his sacred places (tombs, shrines, &c.) and objects of cult, to his sacred animals, images, and individuals (prophets, priests, &c.), and to his spirits and deities, we find a very general resemblance. Everywhere there is a similar attitude where a psychical difference is felt, where the deepest and profoundest feelings and thoughts are aroused, and where the individual recognizes what to him is sacred and holy. The feeling is a blend of reverence and awe, if not of alarm, an obligation to do and not to do, attraction and repulsion, love and fear, anticipation of benefit and dread of harm. The innumerable prohibitions, restrictions, and regulations illustrate the widespread conviction of man that there is in the Universe "something" which though exceedingly beneficent and helpful



## 54 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

is not to be ignored or lightly regarded. The convictions are intensely real, they affect belief and custom ; primarily they are in no degree artificial, abstract, or intellectualistic.

So impressive is the evidence that it has been often, though wrongly, supposed that Religion arose from fear. No one is afraid of the invisible or the unknown, because these do not enter the consciousness ; but one may have a vague sense of fear the cause of which may be unknown. If any fear gave rise to supernatural beliefs, these must evidently have afforded confidence, relief, and courage. It is obvious that fear must always have been followed sooner or later by some psychical change ; it was paralyzing until there was a development in the individual which drove out fear. What outweighed fear ? The transition in question may often seem perfectly normal, but this does not alter the fact that under certain circumstances the psychical transition involves convictions of an essentially religious character. What is normal is not the state of fear but the possibility of conquering it, even unconsciously. The tendency to take this for granted is also normal ; it is the unexpected and the defeat of anticipation that stimulate development. Fear only gave rise to Religion in the way that a doll gives rise to the familiar behaviour of the child ; that is to say, an incident evokes a certain latent tendency, even as the appearance of any problem is a direct invitation to sally forth and ~~attack~~ it. The conquest of fear and difficulty is a natural process, but from time to time man cannot avoid the conviction that it is far from natural, that some strength not of himself is needed. The transitional process is recognized, as extraordinary or as ordinary according to experience and feeling ; the distinction has always been effective, but it is not absolute (*cf.* p. 23 *seq.*).

In course of development the innumerable prohibitions and restrictions have undergone many changes—*that* may now be done with impunity, *this* may not be done. The fundamental ideas are invariably effective

in spite of the changes that meet our eye ; man continues to be aware of something in touch with himself, full of wondrous power and grandeur, but a source of awe. Among rudimentary peoples death has been the penalty and the sequel for an infraction of a "taboo," and the genuineness of their awe on the occasion of their profoundest rites is beyond dispute. In fairy folk-lore the fear of curious gazing upon the sacred survives in the belief that it might be death to see one of the beings with whom the unseen world is peopled. In the Old Testament we find that though men might gaze upon an angel, no one could see the Supreme God and live. Mysticism has had its "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for man to utter": there are some things so intensely real that they can hardly be thought of. A man's greatest Truth is the most fundamental reality he can conceive, and, in his *Essay on Intellect*, Emerson says: "I would put myself in the attitude to look in the eye an abstract truth, and I cannot, I blench and withdraw on this side and on that, I seem to know what he meant who said, No man can see God face to face and live." In this gulf between man and the Reality of the Universe, between normal existence and a profounder ultimate one, a gulf which man of himself cannot bridge, is the root of Religion ; and no Religion that merits the name obliterates the fact of the fundamental distinction between the human and the divine. The recognition of a transcendent Power, felt to be the greatest of all Realities, lies at the heart of Religion, and distinguishes it from any ethical cult or cult of humanity.

Among rudimentary peoples the "taboos," among other functions, regulate man's attitude to the supernatural. Where the chief or ruler has been regarded as a divine representative he has naturally had the profoundest sense of his own position ; just as a natural feeling of self-importance will often accompany a very keen sense of the importance of one's duty. But it is precisely here that man has had impressed upon him the

## 56 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

difference between himself and the transcendent Power. The Greeks insisted upon this gulf in their notion of the envy of the gods, and the insistence finds its counterpart in the Hebrew stories of the expulsion of man from Eden when about to become like the Deity, and of the dispersion of mankind when attempting to reach Heaven. While one Babylonian monarch, who had set himself upon an equality with the Almighty, is threatened with a fall into Hell (Isaiah xiv. 12-15), the story of the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar turns upon a similar arrogance. Even Moses and Aaron are said to have been punished for failing to give the Deity the sanctity due to Him (Num. xx. 12) : neither entered the promised land to which they led the people. That extreme self-consciousness makes life more difficult is an everyday fact, and the self-consciousness of privilege entails responsibility—*noblesse oblige* ; so, when the Hebrew prophet warns the "chosen people" (Amos iii. 2), he expresses in his own way the truth that consciousness of special favour involves a higher standard of behaviour. Man has set on record the results of personal experience, eternal psychical truths that seem strange only when they are in a form conditioned by and adapted to their own particular environments. Man may not ignore or be indifferent to the Divine ; he has to find a proper attitude towards the Supreme Power of the Universe.

To rudimentary peoples any infraction of a "taboo" was a shock, stimulating the profoundest thoughts of the individual and his group. It affected his ideas of himself or of the supernatural. But all ideas of the Self are necessarily imperfect ; like the ideas of the supernatural, they await the completest development of the individual. The Book of Job is the great classic, teaching that man as man has limits to his knowledge, and that the most vivid sense of blamelessness only enhances the inferiority of man before a transcendent Power with whom he feels himself to be related. The loftiest and the deepest experience possessed by the Self is not of a greater Self, a superman, but of a Power superhuman, yet so related to

man that man even feels himself to be part of or related to it. The experience must be co-ordinated with a survey of the individual developing into—a superman? or some closer contact with Reality? (See pp. 34, 52.)

The value of Religion lies in its recognition of the individual's profound and even subconscious intuitions of something more divine than humanity. It must appeal to the individual, because to him all development and progress are due. And it must deal frankly with the individual, because upon his sincerity and integrity depends the stability of civilized social life; for, in course of evolution, as the individual has gained more power for good or for evil, far more depends upon his honesty to himself and to others. "Society," writes Henri Amiel, "rests upon conscience and not upon science; civilization is first and foremost a moral thing."

Fear, distress, and resentment are invariably felt at any new thing that strikes at the supernatural and at the profoundest beliefs of the time. But later, when adjustment has been made, these gain a newer and another value; and, as far back as one can see, there have been alternations as the profoundest ideas have now been shaken and now developed and adjusted to the general advance of thought. Neither the environment nor humanity at large bears the burden, but individuals. There is always a conflict between, on the one side, the many, instinctively and rightly clinging to all that has survived change, and has approved itself to experience; and, on the other, the few, diverging from the environment, readily becoming extreme and harmful, working out their own aims, and thus contributing to the vitality of the whole. The individuals "experiment" and take the risks, and the whole course of evolution is not for them, but for the Unit of which they are part. "Nature" appears to care more for the rank-and-file than for the average physical and psychical stock; but the progress of the latter depends upon the adjustment between the activity of individuals and the less specialistic, more comprehensive and more slowly

## 58 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

moving environment. At any given time the current conditions are due to the action and interaction of all that has gone before, and, in like manner, for the culmination of the evolution of conditions all the constituent members are necessary. It is the function of Religion to enable the individual to find his place in the Universe, to enhance his individuality by assisting in the process of evolution, and to develop psychically by rising above the wrongs and worries caused by others who are working out their own individuality in their own way.

We take our leave of the individual. He is self-assertive, and his selfishness, thoughtlessness, and ignorance are the cause of evil to himself and to others. He is continually showing himself to be one with others, but a persisting repression or suppression of individuality would be detrimental to his development and to that of his environment. The collective movement of the environment makes for adjustment of all extremeness, and as man learns the significance of this he becomes more conscious of his possibilities and responsibilities. In understanding something of the process at work he can understand something of the Power working in man ; and the synthesis he demands will be based upon the experience of a supreme Power with which man has relations. All man's tendencies point to a rational sequence as against any purposeless sequence of happenings ; and the normal, intelligent, and rational man must normally conceive of the Process—in terms of Person. The effort to synthesize knowledge is instinctive. The ideal outcome would be the completest and most absolute Truth. Man is a combination of the instinctive, impulsive, and subconscious, with the more conscious, reflective, and purposive. The ideal outcome of this would have all the wealth of intuition, feeling, and life, without the dangers of spontaneity and impulse, but with the gifts of intellectual reflection—a completeness of self-realization without harmful selfishness. If man's relations with the environment were ideally complete, all would enjoy the completest sense of individu-

ality in a state of harmonious equilibrium. The analysis of the individual as a unit is incomplete if it does not recognize the larger unit of which he is psychically a part, and that larger unit must be the largest conceivable (p. 33). While man's instinctive ideas associate him with both the past and the future, his knowledge of himself is incomplete. Philosophy bids man know himself; in Religion the supreme Self gives way to the Supreme Power of the Universe, of which man is a part.

Man, although one form of evolving matter, and an infinitesimal creature in an inconceivably vast Universe, has both consciously and unconsciously claimed a oneness with the Unity underlying all things, in so far as he has been able to apprehend them. He has felt himself to be the centre of the Universe, an integral part of the Ultimate Existence. His intuitions have associated him with a transcendent source whence he came and whither, as his Self developed, he would return. His intuitions regulated his life and thought, he has sought to confirm and establish them; and in maintaining them against his opponents and against life's troubles, there has been a wonderful advance of thought. All men have been consciously and unconsciously fighting for their values and thus contributing directly and indirectly to the history of man. Although since the time of Copernicus—a mere four centuries ago—man and his earth are seen to be no longer the objective centre of all things, none the less man's intuitions remain and await the knowledge of the relation between his life and mind, and the ultimate principle in the Universe. Upon the slow march of knowledge depends the expression of these intuitions, and the history is a long educative Process, during which he has gained increasing responsibility and power, and an increasing ability for good or evil. To this Process we now turn.

## CHAPTER VI

### PROCESS IN MANKIND

THE saying "God helps those who help themselves" is one of the many popular sayings that become perplexingly interesting when viewed as the outcome of repeated experience. But do we include the atheist, the monopolist, and the selfish egotist? How do we distinguish unless we already have some ideas of God's working? Where do we draw the line between a man's natural courage and superhuman aid? From a religious standpoint the working of the Deity will seem so universal that any objections brought against it will surely disappear with fuller knowledge. But from a non-religious standpoint so much can be explained without resort to the religious argument, that once more we say that with the further advance of research surely the objections of our opponents will be removed. In the former case, as we enlarge the realm of the Divine we begin to include much that seems too ordinary and common, perhaps somewhat derogatory. But in the latter case, a conception of a Universe in terms of scientifically-tested knowledge would not be the world of man's feelings, aspirations, relationships—the world in which we live, think, and have our being. Again, serious difficulties arise when we consider the problems of instinct and intellect; since all that is not associated with man's intellect, intelligence and purposive activities diminishes his freedom and emphasizes the automatic, mechanical, and determined aspects of his life. Sundry theological doctrines combine with sundry philosophical and scientific arguments to oppose the notion of man as

a creative autonomous being with freedom of mind and will. On any standpoint there are exceedingly difficult problems.

Now, in so far as theologians, scientists, and philosophers differ, it is obvious that the experience, observation, and trained knowledge by which they are influenced do not make for identical conclusions. And if the conclusions depend upon intellect, we can hardly sever the "intellectual" writers from the rest according to our own particular beliefs. Certainly, so far as knowledge itself is concerned, it is as yet evidently incomplete and indecisive. And if the serious differences among writers rest upon the general complex psychical differences among all men, we can say with Pascal, "the heart has reasons which reason does not know." It is very necessary to remember that the main tendencies of the mind are pretty definite before a man—be he theologian, scientist, or philosopher—has reached that point where he can be said to have a competent opinion upon his particular subject—he is a man before he is a specialist; and as for those who agree with him, without having his tested knowledge, they are clearly influenced more by feeling than by independent knowledge. Further, although retrospect will allow the conviction that what has been must have been, individuals will differ, some seeing in their lives chance, but others a supernatural guidance, some a predetermined course, but others a greater freedom. But the study of history shows that although the future is the inevitable sequel of the past, it is never possible to tell with any effectiveness precisely what that future will be. In this respect there is a similarity in the development of a body of thought, an individual, a people, or an area; the sequence is genetic, retrospect proves the interconnection, and can tempt a fatalism, but the next stage cannot be foreshadowed with any distinctness. There is an orderly development, but it does not exclude a considerable play of freedom.

The problem of freedom of mind and will involves



## 62 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

both reason and feeling, both intellect and temperament. The more any mechanistic views of life are emphasized, the more are we impelled to perceive the fundamental differences between a machine, the offspring of mind, and an active, developing life. Any comparison forces man to justify his convictions of the differences, and to formulate more clearly the distinctive superiority of the human organism. To define mind so as to include the machine is as uncritical as to define the machine so as to cover the working of the mind; and the many interesting and suggestive similarities do not conceal the fact that, psychologically, mechanism is inferior even to the inorganic crystal with its unity and self-adjusting ability. Mechanistic interpretations are influenced by a mechanical age. The unknown must be explained from the known, and the Universe is usually apprehended in a way suggested by such experience and knowledge as the individual may happen to possess. The fundamental ideas are worked into bodies of thought which are conditioned by the industries, interests, and knowledge of an environment. The fact that there is a usual desire to represent process in terms of what can be modelled, visualized, and apprehended in concrete form, is also exceedingly interesting, as will subsequently be seen (p. 70). But because a thing is expressed in terms of the known, it is a mistake to suppose that it is known; the knowledge of the known is merely an introduction to the unknown. The stage with its players and the stage of life may seem alike, but when we say "all the world's a stage" we do not proceed to build up our ideas of the world in a way suggested by a stage. It would be equally fallacious to construct a naturalistic or mechanistic view of the Universe because much is "natural" and has mechanistic analogies.

We see that a machine works through the combination and interaction of its parts; we explain the whole from the parts. But the machine must be analyzed, both when working and when at rest, and analysis must discover what is necessary for its continued effective-

ness. A problematic situation appears to us as a whole, but repeated experience warns us of the difficulty of determining what the whole is, and what is and is not relevant to it. The skilful detective story is one thing, but it is quite another when there is a problem before us, and we have to find serviceable clues. One man cleverly justifies his position, his solution of the problems of life; but another, finding the problem still unsolved, cannot rest content—and the two attitudes are entirely distinct. Although we may see things as a whole, the ultimate whole so depends upon our experience and knowledge that our solution of the problems of the Universe involves our continued development until we see what is the Whole to be analyzed. In the meantime our explanation may ignore some salient facts. There is a story of a savage who thought that the train was a demon-monster running off with a row of huts. It is perhaps apocryphal, but it is a *ben trovato*, because the savage would justify himself from his experience and knowledge of demons! Only further advance of thought would show him that demons did not exist, and that he had left out some most essential details. Thus, an explanation may answer some evidence, but this is not to say that it answers all; the best and only critical explanation is the most comprehensive, and does justice to all the evidence utilized in all contending and contrary theories. The naturalistic and mechanistic views of the Universe are based upon an incomplete analysis; they do not do justice to the available evidence, and they overlook the most significant part of the Universe—the presence of individuals who insist upon attempting to explain it.

He who feels himself to be free is untouched by the arguments of his opponent against the freedom of the spirit. Both are insisting upon aspects of the Process of the Universe. Both, by using the tools of intelligence, are parts of an intelligent Whole; and any denial of the autonomous power of intelligence virtually weakens the results of the enquiry into the problem and invali-

## 64 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

dates the arguments of the intelligent opponent himself. Furthermore, man is instinctively penitent and conscience-stricken. "Remorse is only a darker name for man's conviction of his own free-will" (Illingworth); and while man instinctively feels that he might have done otherwise, he as instinctively blames the evil-doer. The profounder side of man inevitably impels him to recognise a certain freedom while impressing upon him that there are limits not to be overstepped. No conception of the Universe from a psychical point of view can ignore the phenomena of conscience. It is a simple fact that our conscience is often stronger and more authoritative than our ordinary selves and our environment. There are limits to our power of hushing its voice or of neglecting its warnings. Where conscience is concerned the psychical vicissitudes and transitions are such that it is thoroughly erroneous to go to one extreme and suppose that man can casually "work" himself or "think" himself into the required state, either of penitence or of relief; or to go to the other extreme and suppose that man's conscious Self is psychically isolated from some influence or process vaster than himself. Any investigation of the significance of conscience speedily brings us to perceive man's integral relationship with something so vast and so profound that the only synthetic interpretation can be given in terms of Religion.

"Nature is commanded by obeying her," said Lord Bacon. There are physical laws of the Universe which we cannot control, and only by harmony with which further progress is made; and there are psychical laws and uniformities to which we are inevitably subject. Anthropological research discovers fundamental similarities in man's beliefs and behaviour which imply an unconscious adherence to those uniformities. Men were grammatical before there were grammars, and there was poetry before prosody. Reflection upon what has been more or less instinctively or unconsciously done makes for positive advance; and as man grows in consciousness, the increase of knowledge of Self moves with

an increasing knowledge of all that of which man is an integral part. Only by learning more of the process in past history can mankind expect to progress; progress rests entirely upon intelligence; and such have been man's experiments and failures in his desire to live and to enrich his life, that progress so far from being the outcome of any mechanical or blind process, looks more like an effort at self-education and self-discipline, of which, however, man has not been consciously aware. Man verily seems to have improved in spite of himself, and his purposes have developed beyond their original aims.

Behaviour may seem instinctive, mechanical, or pre-determined when we see a result or a sequel of which the creature or individual is ignorant (*cf.* p. 24), when we forget that the conscious purpose at any given time is not to be confused with the result which is afterwards manifest (*cf.* p. 26), and when we hesitate to allow the creature a psychical individuality. Behaviour may seem mechanical, but an individual would feel free if his activities were not out of harmony with the laws that would thwart or restrict. Even in the land of the greatest freedom transgressors have not complete liberty. The experience and feeling of freedom are more effective than counter-argument based upon a necessarily imperfect knowledge. The members of a team keep together and combine like the parts of a machine—though the machine lacks the indispensable *esprit de corps*; but although there must not be conflicting individualities, the members do not feel themselves to be mechanical. Moreover, the essence of the game depends upon the laws that thwart or restrict! Or take the crowd as a psychical unit; those who are swayed by the rhetorician have surrendered their distinctive individuality (*cf.* p. 38), but they do not feel that they are mere fractions of this unit; they all share, in some particular respect and for some limited time, one psychical life which is free and creative.

And if we turn to those who are exercising influence how familiar is the fact that they must adjust themselves

## 66 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

so as to avoid too disturbing an intervention ! The child learns to walk, fancying its first steps are its own ; the class progresses by being helped to develop itself ; and the amenities of life are increased by tactfully persuading people that they are pleasing themselves when in reality they are taking our advice and our plans they are furthering. Thus does mind act upon mind and enable all to work out their own career. We commonly prefer our own muddling schemes to the immeasurably superior ones you offer us or impose upon us ; ours may be poor things, but they are our own and develop *our* lives. Hence well-meant efforts to benefit others can go astray, can be harmful, and can injure the spirit of a people, because the mind of the few does not realize that the Process in the Universe that has made for the advance from primitive, pre-historic man has been wise, patient, self-effacing, sympathetic, and comprehensive.

We must needs think of any Process associated with man in psychical terms. But we cannot treat Mind as merely intellectual ; for the wise mind involves attitudes of love and reproof, of help and warning, and of that enhances relationship. The fullest knowledge of personality leads to that of a supreme Power ; and if we think of a Universe without a transcendent Power, it is because the latter has no place in our current system of ideas. It is a common error to confuse the Universe in which we live with our particular conceptions of it to-day ; but since we must think in terms of what is known, it is obvious that a better knowledge of the interrelations of minds, of the control of mind, and of its evolution, would allow us to understand less imperfectly the processes in the Universe (*cf.* p. 25). All advances in the psychical world, the world of thought, bring us nearer to the realities which impress themselves upon us psychical beings ; and consequently the increase of ordinary knowledge is invariably for the good of Religion, the permanent advances of which have never been along isolated lines (*cf.* p. 18).

In turning to some examples of the Process we may notice, first, some features of interest for the development of society. An exceedingly important step has been the change in social organization marked by the introduction of certain marriage-bars, which put an end to an earlier system of relationships where very close intermarriages prevailed. At this secondary stage there is an intensely profound horror of incest; it is bound up with supernatural ideas of its danger for the people and the land; and Dr. J. G. Frazer has emphasized the fact that the bars and restrictions find a noteworthy parallel in biological principles (*Totemism and Exogamy*, iv. 160, *sqq.*). The order in which the prohibitions appear and the permission of intermarriage when the parents, though members of the same group, live in different districts correspond with the data of biology and scientific breeding. Now it is impossible to ascribe this to exact knowledge or to any far-seeing care on the part of the savage; whatever the impulse, whatever the cause, the development is beneficial, and it is remarkably in harmony with "natural" law.

Next, we may turn to those ceremonies among rudimentary peoples which, on all occasions of unusual stress, anxiety, or anticipation, bring the individual into touch with the profoundest fundamental beliefs and help to adjust him to the social body. Especially is this to be observed at the difficult period of adolescence, a time when, biologically, one enters into a new and deep relation with the race, and when "conversion" most normally occurs. The age of increased vitality and emotional sensibility is one of the awakening of the individual as a social and religious member of his race. Evidence for sporadic sexual and religious perversity is not so significant as the persistent tendency of Religion to regulate and control all instincts for the general welfare of the individual and his environment. As a time of "rebirth"—for so it is very commonly regarded—it is a rebirth into a larger and more permanent life, that of the group, and rudimentary peoples have taken the in-

## 68 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

dividual at a critical period and have made initiation a discipline and a training for the benefit of all concerned. Only by this initiation did a man come to share the privileges and responsibilities of the community. To the superficial observer there is but a medley of superstitions, of absurd and quite unnecessary beliefs and customs; only on critical inspection is it clear that rudimentary man was building better than he knew, and that his work was more potential than he could realise. Neither prescience nor science actuated him, and an examination of rudimentary bodies of thought among savages of to-day shows clearly that the value of the activities for them is not to be confused with the fuller meaning they have for us whose experience and knowledge are superior. A survey of the development of society reveals the fact that many of our valued customs and principles of law and morality involved in the lower levels a nexus of supernaturalistic and other ideas which appear irrational only when we have outgrown them. Man was on the right track, as it were, without being aware of the road he was laying down. Thus, a study of the progress of society reveals a Process of which the savage was ignorant, one of which we of to-day are still very incompletely cognizant, and one which covers all aspects of life.

Now there is a very close relationship between the lowest and the highest forms of Religion all the world over; men everywhere incline to similar attitudes where their sincerest convictions are at stake (*cf.* p. 22). No doubt the beliefs, customs, and cults often appear crude, but the people, the most backward in culture, cherish some fundamental ethical and religious ideas not substantially different from those inculcated in civilized lands. In totemism, perhaps the most rudimentary of all cults, the members of each group are linked together by an "object," usually a species of animal or plant. In other cults the "object" will be a single animal, an image or idol. But everywhere the psychical resemblances are such that we cannot isolate any one

kind of cult from another. The savage "in his blindness" does *not* bow down to wood or stone; he finds in them what the Roman Catholic peasant finds in some cherished relic—something that makes for support and aid. If we compare the child's attitude to the teddy-bear or doll with that of the mother to her babe, we shall agree that the toy does not "develop" into a babe, that the child has not precisely the feelings and thoughts of the mother; and that, if it conceivably had, an irresponsible toy could not influence or evoke them. What develops is the whole complex: a subject, an object, and the subject's ideas of the particular object. It is not otherwise in the development of thought. It is that of a whole: the stages are potential, full of greater promise, the steps are educative: at the humbler stage there is no conception of the later stages. Only retrospect reveals the interconnection. If we call the behaviour instinctive we must ascribe conscious intelligence and purposiveness to the Process; just as the idea of the "survival of the fittest," and of "natural selection" forces us to recognize *somewhere* a process that has attributes of intelligence. To deny to the Process in the Universe attributes of intelligence and consciousness of development is uncritical; for we, as human beings, have innumerable examples of the more experienced guiding the less experienced; but the only apparent example of the ignorant educating itself is the slow development of mankind, the very problem to be solved! Finally, the recognition of the unity of the Process in the Universe does not make common or derogate from its profoundest and divinest aspects; rather does it dignify and spiritualize the most common: and no survey of rudimentary cults is complete if it does not reveal a sanctification of life even in the lowlier levels of man. "Anything man can do may be divinely done."

While in totemism a child may receive a name associated with the totem, among the Hebrews and other Semitic peoples we find names directly associating the bearer with convictions of the Deity—*e.g.* Azariah,



## 70 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

"Yah (Yahweh, Jehovah) helps"; Hannibal, "Baal's mercy"; Merodach-baladan, "Marduk gave a son," &c. The totem was thought to be beneficial; hence a symbol or sign of it is used as a protection, even as on the higher levels it is that of a deity. In every case the *visible* object arouses profound ideas; and it is a further advance when the *thought* of a Deity is felt to be sufficient. On the lower levels not only is the visible mark effective, but men array and mark themselves so as to represent or symbolize the totem, the guardian or ancestral spirit, and the deity. This "external" imitation is only effective when it stimulates appropriate ideas; as it loses its primary value it becomes conventional, or as weight is laid upon the external aspect it is bereft of its earlier psychical accompaniment. It is "external imitation" when the child's conception of the soldier or the clergyman manifests itself in a few external trappings; but it is potential, and the striving and desire can obviously be effective for further and deeper imitation. Education passes from concrete examples to the abstract, from perception and imagery to conceptual thought. Children—and others—learn by observing behaviour, or by concrete examples of principles and ideas in touch with their psychical environment. Among rudimentary peoples, "external imitation" has been educative and stimulating, and we often find a sort of mimetic display; concrete beliefs and traditions are represented visibly, and are thus impressed upon actors and observers. As apart from the problem of the origin of the practice, its psychological appropriateness is indisputable; but of this rudimentary men are unaware.

Further, in the "external imitation" rudimentary men frequently take the part of their most sacred and venerated beings, as in the old mediæval Mystery-plays or in the modern festival of Ober-ammergau. In the lower levels the totem or spirit is "externally" imitated, but on the higher levels the "internal" or psychical imitation of the Deity is urged, while midway

may be placed the custom of appealing to a god arrayed in a manner representative or symbolical of him. Before man could think of being perfect as his Heavenly Father was perfect, he had to be educated in the rudiments of imitation, and the phrases "garment of righteousness," "to put on" a Deity, and the like, reflect the transition from the more perceptual to the more conceptual stages of thought. The desire to "imitate" a spiritual being did not appear suddenly in the development of man; as we descend to the lowlier levels the "external imitation" of the totem is a solemn occasion, of profound significance for the humble group. In "external imitation" it is natural to see the origin of the traditional knowledge of the external appearance of the sacred and mysterious beings; and at this later stage, where these beings have more "specialized" representatives (*e.g.* priests, kings), significant advances are made through the fact that the human representatives are commonly regarded as more divine than human. They thus affect the current conceptions of the divine.

This leads us to anthropomorphism and anthropopathism, the attribution of human form and personality to a transcendent Power. It makes an important difference whether the "object" of the profoundest ideas of a group has human associations or not. If it has, there is a tendency to delimit the Deity to one's experience of human personality and to degrade his transcendence. But in the lower levels the knowledge of human personality is extremely small, and the psychical difference between an individual and his totem—like that between a child and its doll—is not clearly apprehended. Although the totem may be regarded in the same light as an individual, it has not human powers, the ideas are thereby limited; and among rudimentary peoples we sometimes find that the peculiar value of the animal, whatever it may be, lies in the peculiar qualities of the creature—its strength, swiftness, or cunning. But, again, because the "object" is not human, man is not hampered by his knowledge of human limitations; ideas

can be unlimited, and all non-human powers can be associated with it. The familiar exercises no stimulus, the better we think we know an object the less do we develop; but when the thing that excites us lies outside our knowledge, there is room for imagination—the psychical appetite is whetted, the mind has more scope. Indeed our very ignorance sometimes allows the most absurd ideas, just as when we attribute to the conjuror whose trick has completely mystified us the most extraordinary abilities without considering the most elementary facts. When experience and knowledge fail the mind tends to find some satisfaction; there is a psychical transition, a change in thought, but not necessarily an immediate advance.

Man by his anthropomorphism may degrade the Divine by bringing it down to his own level; thinking he knows man, he thinks he knows the Divine. The psychical difference is obscured just as, when a man's wife is simply and merely a female, the ennobling ideas involved in the relationship are, at least temporarily, obliterated by the transition (*cf.* p. 52). On the other hand, the anthropomorphic development of conceptions of the Deity represents man's unfolding of his experiences, intuitions, and ideals; the development of man's attitude to his Deity is an index to his own psychical growth. Like only knows like, and, as all intercourse with personality unfolds and develops one's own personality, man's advance can be ascribed to the influence of that psychical relationship which is usually felt to be more real and potent than the relationships of everyday physical existence. To the ordinary individual it is the non-anthropomorphic that tends to be unintelligible; the anthropomorphic phases appeal naturally to him, the non-human and all that falls outside anthropomorphism find a less intellectual response. The metaphysics and philosophy seem barren and unreal, the naturalism and all other systems of thought not in terms of a Divine Personality incline to be remote from ordinary thought. Like all poetical, artistic, and

mystical ideas they certainly appear to be subjectively valuable, but they do not necessarily ennoble or even affect everyday experience and the normally constituted mind (*cf.* p. 41).

Now anthropomorphism is the predominating stage in all ordinary thought, religious and scientific. Man knows of himself as a cause, and his mind has its materials within itself (*cf.* p. 25). But neither the very young child nor the most rudimentary stage of society could be anthropomorphic; neither has primarily the necessary\* self-knowledge. Nor can we attribute bodily parts and passions to a Supreme Being or to the individual after death. Anthropomorphism thus seems to be a stage where man comes to know something about his own personality. Efforts are repeatedly made to escape the limitations of anthropomorphism; but there can be no presupposition that they are necessarily worthy or unworthy: they must be tested. The non-anthropomorphic, like the mystical, may tend to be vaguely persuasive; but it must be critically viewed, lest ethically and intellectually it fall below the level of the best (*cf.* p. 50). It is persuasive, because man has his glimpses of something more real than the Universe as he knows it; he has whispers of an existence richer and fuller than his own drabbed life; and his unspeakable longings are for something that cannot be formulated, for a realm which reaches beyond the limits fixed by the thought of his environment. No body of thought, be it religious, theological, philosophical, political, scientific or social, can lastingly satisfy the individual; if it did there would be no movement: it changes and develops because individuals persist in working out their individuality. So long as there is psychical development there is always a Quest of a Holy Grail. The systematized religion and theology of the day will invariably demand some "plus," because existence is vaster than the current comprehension of it. Outside the systematized thought are the ideas psychologically connected with it, due to individuals

## 74 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

who will be estimated in the light of the thought they are disturbing and developing.

Experience and thought are continuously moving and influencing each other (*cf.* p. 30, foot). Systematized thought both develops the individual and restricts individualistic development. The differences around us are due to men of different experience, knowledge, interests, &c. ; the underlying resemblances we perceive only on closer inspection, and by renouncing some relatively narrow religious or rationalistic standpoint (p. 12 *seq.*). In gaining thereby a fairer estimate of the general tendencies of thought, we understand in some small degree what would be already known to a Universal or Supreme Mind ; in aiming at a more objective standpoint we actually approach a somewhat universalistic point of view. Now, if at the present day Religion suffers at all from an uncompromising and rationalistic investigation of its nature, precisely this procedure furnishes both a clearer and more scientific knowledge of Religion, and a deeper and more permanent conception of the "Process" in the Universe—*i.e.* of the working of a Supreme Power among men. Here Religion is indebted to a perfectly unconscious co-operation, to steps in the study of religions which have been hewn by innumerable individuals working out their own plans (p. 24). In particular, Religion is indebted to those who, actuated by whatever motive, have been honestly unable to accept the religious ideas which they found in their environment, and who by their conscientious labours have assisted to produce a sounder knowledge of Man's nature and of the Universe.

## CHAPTER VII

### PSYCHICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MANKIND

SOME notion of the essential features of the psychical development of thought can be obtained from a comparative survey of the various existing levels. The totemism of Central Australia probably represents what is relatively the most primitive of modern systematic cults. Here are many interrelated groups, each with a totem which is mainly a species of edible animal or plant with which the members feel themselves to be virtually one. We must not suppose that the Emu-group, for example, did not know the difference between the emu and the Emu-men. They recognized a sort of psychical identity. Just as we may be deeply moved by a scrap of paper, which, however, happens to be the photograph of a dear friend, so the group acts in an astonishing manner to the species which happens to be its totem. We are reminded of the child and the teddy-bear, because in spite of the difference between the two which *we* see, there is something that makes the child treat it in the well-known way that he does. The totem-group is, in a sense, bound up with the totem and the cult from birth to death. The behaviour of the men proves that the totem is felt to be psychically superior; but it is not a Deity, and if deities are recognized in the area, they do not have that effective place in the cult which is held by the totem.

Now, these groups practise remarkable mimetic ceremonies in the belief that their relationship with the totem enables each group to control its own for the benefit of the others. It is thought that the edible

plants grow abundantly, and the animals multiply through the rites which each group performs. Thus, by its mystical ceremonies the Emu-group provides emu for the rest to eat, the kangaroo-group supplies Kangaroo, and so on. Consequently, the whole tribe is closely knit together, and its solidarity depends upon the obvious fact that the groups are mutually independent. On this low level, therefore, the very remarkable beliefs at least bind the men together, and they can learn, what is perhaps overlooked on the higher levels, that the security of a group, of whatever size, depends on the recognition of the mutual interdependence of all the constituent parts.

Moreover, the group may not eat of their food-totem, or at least only rarely; but on the occasion of these ceremonies it is obligatory, they must eat a little. On other levels we meet with the familiar practice of presenting first-fruits or firstlings to a Deity, or to his representative or minister, in return for the gifts of nature. But the totem-cult has no deity; and if the Emu-group is supposed to further the increase of emu, it stands to other groups, in this respect, as would a deity on those levels where men prayed to one for their food. And so of other groups. Hence, when the officiating group solemnly partakes of food we are reminded of the offerings to the deities on other levels. For several reasons it is more probable that the Australian practice is the earlier type than that it is of secondary origin and has been derived from the practice of giving offerings to a deity. The totem itself is in many respects analogous to the god on other levels. The totem and its group form one whole, and, as we ascend, the god is regarded as united with the body of worshippers; throughout, the Deity and his people are normally two parts of a single unit; both are closely interconnected in the same body or system of thought.

Now the totem rites are felt to be exceedingly profound; they involve self-denial, restraint, and sacrifice, and the occasions are understood to be quite distinct

from ordinary life. Hence, from a psychological point of view, the totem-group practising its sacred rites finds analogies in other groups on their solemn occasions. The psychical state is everywhere profound and impressive, as are all ecstatic, semi-ecstatic, and distinctly non-normal states (see Chap. V.). It is well-known that they exercise great influence, and that artificial means (*e.g.* drugs, music, &c.) are used to reproduce them. But the real value of the state lies in its influence for the welfare of the individual and of his environment, and one of the features of the development of thought is the discrimination between its desirable and undesirable forms and aspects. The totem-group, in its most solemn ceremonies for the welfare of other groups, is in a profound psychical state; its mimetic and other practices associate it with the external object of its profoundest ideas (see p. 70 *seq.*). The natives with their self-denial and sacrifice for others enter a psychical state which can only be described as a communion with something transcendent and unspeakably real; they are one with the totem, which, in the higher levels, is replaced by a Deity. The theory of totem-communion, a brilliant theory of William Robertson Smith (in 1889), is confirmed by the Australian evidence; but it must be observed that the confirmation rests upon the recognition that the beliefs and practices reflect a very rudimentary stage in the development of Religion.

Totemism unites members and groups; it has disciplinary and beneficial aspects. As the totem is generally a species, the cult is not seriously disturbed by the death of any one of them; the species thus makes for a certain stability of conditions. On higher levels, where the object of the cult is a singular and particular thing, an accident or disaster obviously has a dislocating effect. It stimulates thought; but we are at a higher level, the group has had its lesson in stability, a foundation has been laid. There is always a desire to feel that one is not at the mercy of accidents, and the mind invariably tends



## 78 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

to develop so that ideas of continuity and permanence are still retained. Further, while totemism links men together, elsewhere we often find individual guardian spirits, a feature that makes for the strengthening of individuality as against group-solidarity. At a low stage of development it is obvious that ideas of the closest and most intimate union are more effective and valuable than those of distinctive individuality. Totemism presents many serious problems; it is very difficult to imagine its origin, but it has features exceedingly valuable from religious, ethical, social, and economical points of view. There is no reason to suppose that the natives are as aware of this as we are, still less that the system was consciously planned by their ancestors; but it has all the marks of wisdom, and is a profound example of the many-sided "Process" as it works on the lower levels *at the present age*.

No doubt totemism seems crude and in some respects derogatory from certain conceptions of a Deity. The point, however, is not whether an area possesses the beliefs and practices we appreciate, but whether what they have may be said to be effective and potential. Our attitude to the religious and other ideas of men is an index to our own, and man may not specify the limits of the Deity's working nor the manner in which others are to recognize Him: nor can one assume that if a man does not recognize the Deity, the Deity is not interested in him. The problem of "revelation" in the past involves that of existing conditions to-day; the ideas one may have of a loving and long-suffering Deity in the course of ages must be tested by the present situation; conceptions of God's relation to us involve those of His relation to the savage (*cf.* p. 12). Or, from a non-religious point of view, the Process that has made for the differing conditions to-day, for the "inferiority" of one and the "superiority" of another, is assuredly immanent; and not only does the self-consciousness of any superiority entail a greater responsibility (p. 56), but there can never be any *a priori* assumption that the

highest level of thought will always be where it happens to be at some particular age.

In totemism the essentially religious ideas correspond with the low stage of conditions; every apology for Religion must virtually apologize for the culture and civilization in which it is found—and *vice versa*. It is at least evident that, as the savage finds strength and comfort in his nucleus of beliefs and practices, so, in the distant past, when man had to get on terms with Nature, man either had no psychical needs, or those he had were in some way answered. His psychical endowment grew with his physical environment. Could primitive man have had any idea of a universal God unless he had some idea of a Universe? The idea of a "universal" God involves a synthesis of experience and knowledge of the world. Man may see a thing as a whole in all its relations, *i.e.* the experience—the feeling—may be subjectively absolute and complete; but objectively it is imperfect, because man's conceptions of the Universe are imperfect (*cf.* p. 66). At a low level man's conceptions could be such that they completely filled such psychical life as he had; but they would necessarily be exceedingly rudimentary. In various parts of the world we find generalizing conceptions of the supernatural: in Melanesia, *Mana*, and among the North American Indians, *Wakonda* (Sioux), *Orenda* (Iroquois), and *Manitou* (Algonkin). The terms are applied to distinctly non-normal phenomena and occasions where, primarily, the individual felt, or was taught to feel, that they were quite apart from the normal. The test must primarily be subjective (p. 23 *seq.*); tradition enters subsequently, and the feeling of a difference between the sacred, holy, and extraordinary, as contrasted with all that is not so, combines with the traditional knowledge deciding to which of the two so-and-so belonged. The terms presuppose the apprehension of something too universal, too distributed and too vague to be personal; yet, when it is particularized, and a particular manifestation is recognized, there seems to be an immediate tendency for man to think of it as

## 80 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

something approaching personality, and directly related to himself. The terms and their application may recall the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit in that a wondrous Power is recognized where the individual experiences, or expects, or is taught to expect it.

Now the above generalized terms obviously go back to personal experience, and they persisted because experience continued to be essentially similar in spite of the more external differences in the history of thought. We all have feelings and thoughts that lie too deep for words, and we are indebted to those whose gifts of expression allow us to make them explicit. No individual could use these terms unless the environment had them, and was applying them to appropriate phenomena. The experience is to some degree shared by the environment; yet the latter, in its turn, must be indebted primarily to individuals. As far back as we can go, therefore, we have to postulate (a) individual experience, shared by individuals, and (b) the common recognition that here was something profoundly different from ordinary life. The beginning of Religion is like the beginning of Science, we must first clearly understand what we mean, so as to know what to look for, and then recognize that, from the evolutionary point of view, at any stage where we can say, "here is the beginning," there must have been a necessary antecedent stage of which this is the genetic successor. Like the dawn of Religion in the child, there must be the preliminary steps, though we cannot perceive in them Religion as we define it. Clear definitions are necessary, but they obscure some questions and tend to ignore the continuous evolution of thought (see p. 28 seq.); hence the best definition of Religion—as also of Science—must be one that will enable both to do more effectively in the future what they have already done so well in the past. The precise origin of Religion is a question we can neither answer nor ask. At the earliest stage where man had conscious feelings, his fear and despair were not so significant as his courage, joy, and confidence (see p. 54). At the point where it could be legitimately

said that he had supernatural ideas, everything suggests that man was conscious of something to be approached, though with heed, something beneficent, but not to be lightly esteemed or ignored (p. 53). The first step, one may conjecture, was the consciousness of a psychical gulf which even yet has not been bridged (*cf.* p. 55 *seq.*).

The fundamental features of Religion are now to be found in varying bodies of belief and behaviour, the critical comparison of which is most important for the study of man's unconscious and conscious cravings (p. 11 *seq.*). The differences and advances are throughout due to psychical development. There is reason to believe that in the development of society the collective "we" preceded the individual "I," and that the central "object" of the cult was psychically one with the group. The totem on the lower levels and the god on the higher primarily belong to one unit with their followers; each is essentially an integral and central part of the body of thought shared by all. But even the totem is superior, just as the stone which is regarded as a fetish differs from any other stone, because very profound thoughts are focussed upon it. So long as a totem, fetish, image, deity, symbol, or even a name, aroused appropriate feelings and thoughts, it was effective. We ourselves know how we can be influenced by flag, badge, "think button," photograph, or honoured name. If a man assume that the "thing" (whatever it is) is effective in itself, obviously he deceives himself; unless there be an appropriate psychical accompaniment there can be no advance. It is sterile, and is characteristic of "Magic." Very difficult questions arise, mainly because we cannot understand other points of view; but the great changes, and the innumerable transitions thereby involved, lead us to infer that the features that persist in similar or in related forms are those that usually proved themselves effective (p. 12 *seq.*). If so, it is evident that the predominating tendency throughout every stage of development has been for man to find a source of strength in

## 82 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

something psychically superior to himself and to all his fellows.

The belief has prevailed widely that a man's soul, vital principle, or life could be transferred to some external object where it would be tolerably secure. It is easy to understand the solace afforded by this belief. At another level we find man putting his trust in a spiritual Being and gaining comfort in this psychical relationship; and this stage, of course, presupposes earlier ones before there were conceptions of a spiritual Being. Now, when the belief in the "external soul" broke down, the consequent fear, anxiety, and resentment can be readily imagined. A greater strain was laid upon men and a psychical development was forced. The result is seen in the higher levels where the concrete external object has disappeared; there is a generally higher character of thought, and a body of ideas associate man with his God. But this body, in turn, is so regarded as a material structure that what affects part is often thought to affect the whole. Consequently, when the body or doctrine is endangered by the progress of knowledge, once more there are the disturbing features, once more there is need for faith, for reason, for further psychical advance, and for the recognition that bodies of thought grow and evolve (p. 19). The body of thought, whatever be its external form, is everywhere founded upon experience; and even the rudimentary conviction of an "external soul" is quite unintelligible unless it rested upon some psychical foundation of confidence and courage. Throughout there is a common feeling of security due to a psychical relationship; it expresses itself in varying forms, and consequently there may be new external forms, more in accord with the thought of the age (*cf.* p. 12).

At earlier stages of development human sacrifice has often been viewed as a valuable and impressive offering. But when it was condemned, it would doubtless seem to some that the animal surrogate, simpler and less valuable, could hardly be acceptable. Indeed,

to "cheapen" sacrifice really laid a greater responsibility upon man; yet, at the same time, the development enforced the fact that the essence of sacrifice lay in the attitude of the individual—i.e. in the psychical accompaniment. Even in the Central Australian totemism the men by self-denial, restraint, and self-inflicted suffering recognize the special character of their solemn occasions, and the ceremonial eating of the totem entails the object of their profoundest ideas who is one with themselves (pp. 75 *sqq.*). Here, as elsewhere, sacrifice is primarily something personal and valuable, involving an ennobling and sanctifying feeling of psychical relationship. It is perfectly true that sacrifice sometimes assumes forms suggestive of barter or exchange, but not only does man persist in seeking this relationship even when the expected fails, it rests entirely with him whether his motives are what they appear to be to the external observer. If sacrifice was invariably regarded as a convenient and handy method of producing desired results, it was of no ethical benefit, and its persistence from level to level in the course of the development of thought would destroy our most fundamental postulates of right and wrong, and of our race. It is quite intelligible that particular sacrificial practices should disappear as men found them psychically useless, but that sacrificial ideas should reappear is an indication of their new value. Just as no man can believe himself loved unless he has experienced love, so no man could have a sense of relationship, more real and fundamental than any human relationship, unless a psychical experience justified him.

The supposition that man by thought and imagination can "work himself" into some desirable state, overlooks the fact that in conscience, prayer, sacrifice, &c. we have phenomena proving that there are unmistakable limits to what man can do by exercise of will or by his own aided powers. There is no "will to forget"; the phenomena involve man's profounder part of himself and all that is bound up therewith (*cf.* p. 64). If we

## 84 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

view prayer as a communion and an appeal, it is noteworthy that although even in totemism we find the germs or the essentials of communion (p. 77), there is no appeal, or, to be more precise, the appeal here and elsewhere takes a remarkably concrete form. Men represent their needs visibly, or they act them. The mimetic ceremonies believed to bring rain, crops, and even offspring, are not necessarily coupled with what we should call prayer; the savage in his profound psychical state objectifies concretely, as it were, his wants and desires. Any unselfish and lovable behaviour on the lower levels is naturally of a somewhat rudimentary character, but it is more significant than the crudeness of the concrete activities or the absence of explicit prayer. And just as the parent does not wait for the child to formulate its needs in adult language, so no superior mind would refrain from intervention simply because the appeal has not been couched in particular terms. The fact remains that on the lower levels men act their wants, yet, in spite of the usual disappointments, they persist in their beliefs and practices. It is open for us to pity and deplore their senseless and pathetic blindness; but it may be more scientific, and also more courteous to our race, to suppose that they persist for the same reason that men on higher levels persist in explicit prayer and implicit appeal in spite of apparent failure.

Strangely concrete also is the behaviour where sin, offence, purification, and forgiveness are concerned. Abundant evidence shows how keenly man felt the necessity of assuming a proper attitude to the object of his supernatural beliefs, and the taboos indicate the reality of man's awe and fear at any infraction of the regulations (p. 53 *seq.*). There can be no doubt that even on the lowest levels man has the keenest sense of fear, regret, remorse, and subsequent rehabilitation. The concrete ceremonial must, on psychological grounds, be primarily effective; but since we find considerable variation and development of detail, we can infer that the

changes occurred when its value lay merely in externalities and there was no appropriate psychical accompaniment. On the other hand, the persistence on various levels, underlying the external differences, points to the fundamental similarities in the psychical nature of man: his grief when in some way the relationship was obscured by his own acts and by those of his group, and his desire to have it renewed. When there is a common group-feeling we may find a conviction of joint or corporate responsibility for sin, man's guilt or forgiveness rest upon his being one of the group. But, as ideas of individuality advance he has to bear the responsibility himself, and as he comes to perceive how his offences wrong others, he learns that the psychical transitions whereby those who are wronged rise above injury, are compassionate and forgive, involve a great collective "process" of which we are only imperfectly aware. Though every act has its inevitable consequences, there is a "process" which shapes them so that the good outweighs the evil, and the past changes with our changing point of view—but the "process," though man is an integral part of it, is vaster than man, and here man knows only too well his own limits.

Throughout, the underlying intuition that man is part of some larger unit regulates life and thought; the persistent belief that man (or his group) and the god form one whole, as it were, accompanies the conviction that the god is interested primarily in his land. When groups differ their gods tend to be different, and as they converge the gods converge; the link is the identity or harmony of the profoundest feelings and thoughts. The relations between men and their gods are influenced by the vicissitudes of history. In war the deity, of course, fought for his people. But if there was defeat he might be replaced by another; or there was faith, and by a psychical development came the conviction that he was punishing his own people. When the god and his people form a separate whole, there was increasing fluctuation of thought. In like manner when we find



group and deity and human representative, numerous developments recur influenced by the ideas of the last of the trio. When in the body of thought the ideas of the Deity are severed from the rest, Religion is out of touch with life; God seems to be remote. We then find trustful faith, recrudescence of superstition and growth of new cults, anticipation of a coming change, a deliverer or a new age, and a more objective and critical attitude towards those questions which had previously been too sacred to be discussed. All these prepare for positive advances at another stage. Especially characteristic then is the renewed emphasis upon the nearness of the supernatural—the accessibility of God; it will be expressed in the best thought and knowledge of the time: for God and the group will once more form part of the same unit of thought. Throughout, the advances are due to individuals, man draws out what is in man, and that intense feeling for those who have brought a new stage into our life has in the past seen in them men more Godlike and Divine than ourselves. Yet, the gulf between man and the Ultimate is so profound, and man's indebtedness to his fellows so complete, that before the Supreme Power of the Universe all men are equal, and those who have most privileges and are most gifted have the heaviest burdens. Those who have the keenest realization of the psychical relationship, which assuredly all men, unconsciously or consciously, reveal in some degree, are those to whom the question, "Lovest thou me?" always brings the command "Feed my sheep."

"The spirit of Heaven," says Novalis, "reveals itself most clearly in human events and feelings"; and as the critical and rationally sympathetic study of man reveals the immanence of a Divine Power, gratitude is shown by intelligent devotion to the members of the Unit to which all belong.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

THIS booklet handles neither metaphysical questions of reality nor the systematized bodies of thought which unite the fundamental religious convictions with current knowledge. The examination of religious and related beliefs and practices reveals fundamental similarities touching man's intuitions and convictions of a personal relationship with an immanent and transcendent Power. The very profound differences indicate the continuous development as man learns more of himself and of his environment. His conceptions of the Universe rest upon his thoughts and ideas ; every eye can see plants, animals, skeletons, and fossils, but the fruitful ideas of evolution depend primarily upon the way in which the concrete objects are viewed. Increase of thought develops conceptions of God and of the world, and in this respect both are "man made." The development is a collective movement, and all share in the good and evil they have wrought. It has been due to mind in the past, and in the future the process will be essentially psychical.

Although modern complexity and differentiation of life and thought compel a certain specialism, progress in the past has been "all along the line," and must assuredly be as comprehensive in the future. Religion dignifies and sanctifies the whole life ; it nourishes the whole man, and must be in harmony with all thought and practice. There are those who frankly condemn certain aspects or features of Religion, yet have fundamental beliefs and ideas of a religious character—*e.g.*

## 88 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

immortality, pre-existence, a psychical Power realizing itself in humanity, a system of spiritual selves, and so forth. These ideas must obviously be formulated very carefully, lest people read into them what the writers themselves would repudiate. Hence we may perceive the invariable necessity of placing in a sort of framework all fundamental convictions and ideas of a religious or semi-religious character, partly to guide the ordinary man and partly to exclude undesirable interpretations and accretions. Ideas of this character, even among writers who condemn some or all doctrinal systems, must, like all ideas that involve other nuclei, be elaborated with some completeness and systematized. As a result of this, the very systematization of thought, which directs and unites men, may subsequently hinder continued development (*cf.* p. 74). It is important, therefore, to realize the difference between a current situation and future development.

Every man comes between an unknown prelude and an unknown sequel; his own body of thought is never really complete, his environment is merely at some intermediate stage of development. All the tendencies of the normal man involve the antithesis between existing conditions and ideas and ideals reaching forward to some later stage. The next stage is invariably the result of collective and, therefore, comprehensive effort, even as each stage in thought is due to the collective result of diverse departments of knowledge and research (*cf.* p. 24). The individual in his life history is developing some-whither; but while his fullest self-realization cannot conceivably require the explicit subordination of others, self-renunciation does actually lead to a greater independence and frees a man of accidents. With La Cordaire: "to possess oneself is the first act of the divine life; to give oneself is the second." Poets, mystics, and others all speak of a vaster existence of which everyone at some time or other is at least half conscious—for even the love of fiction is the craving for a bigger life—and the survey of human development so emphatically indicates the moral, rational, and comprehensive char-

acter of the Process working in the Universe that life seems but an education for something grander and more perfect. Step by step man is learning to discipline himself, to handle more difficult problems, to fit himself for greater powers and heavier responsibilities. Hard though the burdens of this life may be, they are lightened by the conviction of a "worth-while-ness."

The language that expresses our experience is as inadequate as the clumsy chalk mark on the blackboard, which is supposed to represent a mathematical line devoid of breadth and absolutely straight. It is an error to use our imperfect symbols as bases for investigation; rather must one go below the surface, recover the underlying meaning, and seek to improve the tools and instruments of thought. Our intellect both assists and impedes us, but only through it can progress come (p. 31 *seq.*). The intellect enriches the profound experiences which language can scarce formulate, and only the most persistent industry leads man to realize in a newer way his place in the Universe. But the intellectual life is only part of existence. The intellect, by putting the supernatural on one side, has learned more of the mysteries of Life; it has yet to consecrate itself to the work of determining the significance of Life so far as current knowledge permits.

There are those who feel that the world stands on the threshold of a new era; and certainly stage by stage the Process is such that the creature and its environment develop together. Moreover, thought is becoming more international, and any distinctive results tend to have a world-wide effect. "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked," and when civilization has a Pisgah-view of new possibilities and powers, it is not quite so certain that it feels the need of a Deity. On the other hand, there is no reason to suppose that the Process in the Universe will be different in the future; and to the leader who did not "sanctify" the Lord in the midst of the children of Israel (Deut. xxxii. 51; *cf.* p. 56), Pisgah was the end of his labours. Since civilization depends upon the co-operation and mutual forbearance of men and upon

## 90 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

a harmony of their profoundest ideas, any weakness where Religion is concerned affects precisely that which makes for solidarity and cohesion. The whole course of evolution is marked by the weeding-out of the unfit and by the fall of civilizations in the past ; it has essentially been for the whole and not for any one of the parts. Yet, while the interconnexion of history is such that the loss of one area is always the gain of another, and while every stage is the genetic outcome of the preceding, man can never foresee the exact results of his endeavours, and a throttling pessimism would be as wrong as a blind optimism. The unit of activity extends outside man's conscious plans and beyond himself, and common experience acknowledges that God's ways are not man's ways.

Man instinctively associates himself with the past and the future, as though he were part of a larger whole. His duty is to carry on the work of his predecessors. He can work for the Process or against it, and such is the psychical interrelation that if man needs God, God needs man. It is immaterial whether man's activity, be it good or bad, is known only to himself ; his part in the collective process, and his intuitive apprehension of a larger relationship, give him an integral share in the world's good or evil. Man cannot escape the Universe of which he has become conscious, and if man and the Universe are so related, there is a fuller truth in the old proverb : " It's an ill bird that fouls its own nest " ! Better knowledge and clearer retrospect give a greater significance to the less conscious and less purposive steps in the past, and further progress comes only by the most comprehensive thought and by attention to the elemental principles of right and wrong. Increase of consciousness and of power brings increase of responsibility ; and more than ever man will need that psychical relationship which alone gives strength and wisdom. In the recognition of a transcendent Supreme Power—which man calls God—human differences are seen to be temporal and man can only be humble. At the same time, as the conditions at every stage depend

upon all that has gone before, so in the further development all must play their part.

No man is born into the world whose work  
Is not born with him ; there is always work,  
And tools to work withal, for those who will.  
And he who waits to have his task marked out  
Shall die and leave his errand unfulfilled.

Man may not bury his single talent in the ground : to quote further from Lowell : " Not failure, but low aim, is crime." Nor is it easy for man to double his five talents without in some way thwarting his fellows. The world consists of individuals by whose deeds, as each strives to realize himself, the good and the evil are multiplied. Man is the great experimenter, striving for good which too often produces evil, doing evil which is often transmuted into good. His activities are his contribution to the delights and the difficulties of the Universe ; and if man is an integral part of the Universe, the Universe is incomplete without the individual, despite the fact that Nature pays more regard to the race as a whole. So, too, the Christian conviction that God so loved the World that He would not intervene on behalf of His beloved, brings with it the corollary that His evident love for the whole of creation must extend to every part thereof. And herein lies the trust of all individuals, from those we place the highest to those who seem to us to be the lowest.

The comparative study of religions has proved the fundamental similarities in the different forms of Religion, a not altogether surprising result when we consider the scientific evidence for the oneness of all mankind. Psychology next comes forward and proves the fundamental connexion between the religious and the non-religious aspects of Life and Thought. Man must form ideas of a Universe—the largest Unit of which he is part—of Process in the Universe, and of his relationship to the Universe. Religion, with its intuitive ideas and its experience of man's relationship to a great Personal Power, must express itself according to the par-

## 92 THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

ticular experience and knowledge of the particular individual ; while the environment, in tending to repress all extreme individualism, is the more effectively stimulated by the individual.

At the present day there is a marked absence of properly co-ordinated and synthesized thought, due to the relatively recent and very conspicuous advances in practically every branch of knowledge. None the less, men are fundamentally psychically similar, and there is a keen spirit, which whether religious, quasi-religious, or psychologically connected with the religious spirit, has not the customary religious expression.

Serious problems thus arise, since Religion out of touch with the best knowledge may deteriorate and become Superstition, and the best thought cannot conceivably be co-ordinated or synthesized with the exclusion of Religion (see p. 18). Hence, the problems of the age are not merely social, economic, and political, not merely psychological and scientific. They are the outcome of a genetic and orderly development leading to a very vivid self-consciousness which makes a landmark in the history of our Universe. The problems involve the adjustment of experience, knowledge, and thought, and a recognition of man's place in the world of Life and Thought. The problems partly demand clear, strenuous, and sane intellectual enquiry, and partly the realization that man is only part of the Process in the Universe, and that he is not alone in his endeavours to deal with his difficulties. Man cannot with impunity go back to earlier types of belief and behaviour ; and every advance has been psychical, rational, with enrichment of thought and for the benefit of the average man. Every advance in consciousness brings heavier responsibilities and greater opportunities ; but there has been no progress unless Religion has accompanied it, because Religion deals with the profoundest and the most fundamental of all man's ideas, beliefs, and convictions, whether he consciously realizes them or not.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE literature is enormous. *Psychology*, by H. J. Watt, in this series, gives a helpful introduction and bibliography, while, for the application of psychology to religion, reference may be made to the American writers, E. S. Ames, *Psychology of Religious Experience* (Constable, 1910); I. King, *Development of Religion* (Macmillan, 1910); G. M. Stratton, *Psychology of the Religious Life* (Allen, 1911); J. H. Leuba, *Psychological Study of Religion* (Allen, 1912). The evidence for Mysticism is scattered; a good introductory account with bibliography is given by C. F. E. Spurgeon, *Mysticism in English Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 1913). For the comparative study of religions special reference may be made to the works of J. G. Frazer (*Golden Bough*, &c.), and to Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. For the subject in its philosophical and religious bearings, see E. Durkheim, *Les Formes Élémentaires de la Vie Religieuse* (Paris, 1912), and the more apologetic works of F. B. Jevons (*The Idea of God in Early Religions, Comparative Religion*, &c.), and J. A. Macculloch, *Comparative Theology* (Methuen, 1902). Especially important for their sympathetic, though quite objective treatment, are the writings of A. C. Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism* (Constable, 1906), &c., and R. R. Marett, *Threshold of Religion* (Methuen, 1909), *Birth of Humility* (Oxford University Press, 1910), and articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, eleventh edition, "Prayer," "Religion," "Ritual" (see also other articles mentioned in the Index Volume, p. 945). General questions of a philosophical and scientific nature are, of course, fundamental; the following vary greatly in standpoint and aim, and



are merely a few examples of the numerous works that contribute to the subject of this booklet : H. W. Carr, *The Problem of Truth* ; A. J. Jones, *Rudolf Eucken* (both in this series) ; J. R. Illingworth, *Personality Human and Divine* (Macmillan) ; J. M. E. M'Taggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion* (Arnold, 1906) ; G. T. Ladd, *Knowledge, Life and Reality* (Longmans, 1909) ; C. F. Keary, *The Pursuit of Reason* (Cambridge, 1910) ; W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience* (Yale, 1912) ; L. T. Hobhouse, *Development and Purpose* (Macmillan, 1913). As for the present writer's standpoint, he may be permitted to refer to his essays on the *Evolution and Survival of Primitive Thought*, *Ridgeway Presentation Volume* (Cambridge, 1913) and on *The Critical Study of Religions* (A. & C. Black, in the Press).

## INDEX

ADOLESCENCE, 67  
 Anthropology, 12, 64  
 Anthropomorphism, 71 *seqq.*  
 Authority, 21 *seq.*, 49

CAUSE, 25, 73

Child thought, 27, 54, 69, 71,  
 75, 80, 84

Christianity, 11 *seq.*, 19, 21 *seq.*,  
 80, 91

Collective (process, ideas, &c.),  
 24, 27 *seq.*, 32 *seq.*, 38, 85, 88,  
 90,

Communion, 39, 51, 77, 84

Comparative method, 11 *seq.*,  
 21 *seq.*

Concrete (material) thought, 10,  
 62, 70 *seq.*, 81, 84

Conscience, 64, 83

Consciousness (awareness), 24  
*seq.*, 34, 50 *seq.*

Control, 26, 31, 38 *seqq.*, 46, 50

Critical method, 12 *seqq.*, 21, 61  
*seq.*

Crowd, psychology of, 38 *seq.*, 65

DEAD, the, 27, 32, 42 *seqq.*

Deity, objective existence, 16  
 — consciousness of, 34 *seq.*, 78  
*seqq.*

— development of ideas of, 70  
*seqq.*, 76, 78 *seqq.*, 85 *seqq.*

ENVIRONMENT and the individual,  
 15, 32, 41 *seq.*, 51, 57 *seq.*, 64,  
 74, 86, 89

Evolution (development), gene-  
 tic, 20, 61, 80, 90; of concepts,

10; religion, 12; thought,  
 19 *seqq.*, 61, 69; of the indi-  
 vidual, 26 *seqq.*, 42 *seq.*, 57 *seq.*;  
 its reality, 87

Experience, its interpretation,  
 10, 16, 30 *seq.*, 49 *seqq.*

FATALISM, 61, 90

Fear and religion, 54

Food, rites, 78

Frazer, Dr. J. G., 67

Freedom, free will, 24, 60 *seqq.*

GENIUS, 24, 32, 41

HEAVEN and Hell, 15 *seq.*, 56

Humility, 52 *seqq.*

IDOLS, idolatry, 68 *seqq.*, 81

Imitation, 70 *seq.*, 75 *seqq.*

Immortality, 27, 42 *seqq.*

Individual, objective value of,  
 41, 51, 86. See ENVIRONMENT

Individuality, 31, 33, 37 *seqq.*, 41,  
 44, 66

Initiation, 68

Instinct (instinctive ideas, &c.),  
 20, 25 *seqq.*, 30, 32 *seq.*, 42 *seqq.*,  
 51, 57, 60, 64, 67, 69, 90

Intellect, 30, 50, 89

LANGUAGE, 10, 49, 89

MAGIC, 81

Mana, 79

Marriage bars, 67

Materialism, 27

Matter, 28 *seqq.*

Mechanism, mechanistic theories, &c., 26 *seq.*, 42, 60 *seqq.*

Mind, 28, 30, 61 *seq.*; influence on mind, 38, 44, 65 *seq.*, 84

Mysticism 48 *seqq.*, 55, 73

NATURE, 35, 57, 91

PERSONALITY, 22, 71 *seq.*

Personal power, 25, 33, 58, 66, 79 *seq.*

Prayer, 84

Process in the Universe, 24 *seq.*, 27, 29, 66, 69, 78, 85, 90. *See* Collective

Psychical (mental, spiritual, as opposed to the bodily, concrete, material, and physical), gulfs, 42, 52 *seq.*, 81

— realities, 16, 27, 34, 40, 51, 56, *cf.* 87

Purpose, 24, 26, 28, 65, 74. *See* Evolution

RATIONALISM, 13 *seq.*, 74

Re-birth, 44, 67

Religion, beginning, 54 *seq.*, 80; comparison of, 11 *seq.*; definition, 9, 80; evolution, 12 *seq.*, 17 *seq.*, 20, 74, 86; function, 57 *seq.* *See* Mysticism, Supernatural, Superstition

SACRED, test of, 23, 79

Sacrifice, 44, 82 *seq.*

Self, consciousness of, 25 *seqq.*, 28 *seq.*, 72 *seq.*; development of, 34, 37, 42, 52, 72; extreme, 41, 56; and Deity, 34, 53, 56 *seqq.*, 59, 64, 86

Sin, 53 *seqq.*, 84 *seq.*

Smith, Robertson, 77

Society, solidarity of, 18, 76, 78

Subconscious (unconscious), 24 *seqq.*, 34, 42

Swicide, 44

Supernaturalism (as opposed to the natural), 16, 23, 34 *seq.*, 53, 56, 60 *seq.*, 79

Superstition, 45 *seq.*, 86, 92

Survival (persistence) of ideas, &c., 11, 45, 69, 80 *seqq.*

Symbol, 70, 81

Sympathy, 46

TABOOS, 53 *seqq.*, 84

Totemism, 68 *seqq.*, 75 *seqq.*, 81, 83

UNIVERSE and man, 17, 28, 59; ideas of, 29, 33, 35 *seq.*, 51, 62 *seqq.* *See* Process.

# THE PEOPLE'S BOOKS

General Editor—H. C. O'NEILL

"With the 'People's Books' in hand there should be nobody of average intelligence unable to secure self-education."—*Sunday Times*.

• NOW READY (February 1914)

## THE FIRST NINETY-SIX VOLUMES

1. The Foundations of Science . . . . . By W. C. D. Whetham, M.A., F.R.S.
2. Embryology—The Beginnings of Life . . . . . By Prof. Gerald Leighton, M.D.
3. Biology . . . . . By Prof. W. D. Henderson, M.A.
4. Zoology: The Study of Animal Life { By Prof. E. W. MacBride, M.A., F.R.S.
5. Botany; The Modern Study of Plants { By M. C. Stopes, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S.
7. The Structure of the Earth . . . . . By Prof. T. G. Bonney, F.R.S.
8. Evolution . . . . . By E. S. Goodrich, M.A., F.R.S.
9. Heredity . . . . . By J. A. S. Watson, B.Sc.
11. Inorganic Chemistry . . . . . By Prof. E. C. C. Baly, F.R.S.
12. Organic Chemistry . . . . . By Prof. J. B. Cohen, B.Sc., F.R.S.
13. The Principles of Electricity . . . . . By Norman R. Campbell, M.A.
14. Radiation . . . . . By P. Phillips, D.Sc.
15. The Science of the Stars . . . . . By F. W. Maunder, F.R.A.S.
16. The Science of Light . . . . . By P. Phillips, D.Sc.
17. Weather Science . . . . . By R. G. K. Iampfert, M.A.
18. Hypnotism and Self-Education . . . . . By A. M. Hutcheson, M.D.
19. The Baby: A Mother's Book . . . . . By a University Woman
20. Youth and Sex—Dangers and Safe- { By Mary Scharlieb, M.D., M.S., and  
guards for Boys and Girls { F. Arthur Sibly, M.A., LL.D.
21. Marriage and Motherhood . . . . . { By H. S. Davidson, M.B.,  
F.R.C.S.P.
22. Lord Kelvin . . . . . By A. Russell, M.A., D.Sc., M.I.F.E.
23. Huxley . . . . . By Professor G. Leighton, M.D.
24. Sir William Huggins and Spectro- { By E. W. Maunder, F.R.A.S., of the  
scopic Astronomy . . . . . Royal Observatory, Greenwich
26. Henri Bergson . . . . . By H. Wildon Carr, Litt.D.
27. Psychology . . . . . By H. J. Watt, M.A., Ph.D., D.Phil.
28. Ethics . . . . . By Canon R. Ashdall, D.Litt., F.B.A.
29. Kant's Philosophy . . . . . { By A. D. Lindsay, M.A., of Balliol  
College, Oxford
32. Roman Catholicism . . . . . { By H. B. Coxon, Preface, Mgr. R.  
H. Benson
33. The Oxford Movement . . . . . By Wilfrid Ward.
34. The Bible and Criticism . . . . . { By W. H. Bennett, D.D., Litt.D.,  
and W. F. Adeney, D.D.
36. The Growth of Freedom . . . . . By H. W. Nevins.
37. Bismarck and the Origin of the { Professor F. M. Powicke  
German Empire . . . . .
38. Oliver Cromwell . . . . . By Hilda Johnstone, M.A.
39. Mary Queen of Scots . . . . . By E. O'Neill, M.A.
40. Cecil John Rhodes, 1853-1902 . . . . . By Ian D. Colvin
41. Julius Caesar . . . . . By Hilary Hardinge
42. England in the Making . . . . . { By Prof. F. J. C. Hearnshaw, M.A.,  
LL.D.
43. England in the Middle Ages . . . . . By E. O'Neill, M.A.
44. The Monarchy and the People . . . . . By W. T. Waugh, M.A.
45. The Industrial Revolution . . . . . By Arthur Jones, M.A.
46. Empire and Democracy . . . . . By G. S. Veitch, M.A., Litt.D.

# THE PEOPLE'S BOOKS—(continued)

47. *Women's Suffrage* . . . . . By M. G. Fawcett, LL.D.
51. *Shakespeare* . . . . . By Prof. C. H. Haskard, Litt I
52. *Wordsworth* . . . . . By Thomas Munro
53. *Pure Gold—A Choice of Lyrics and Sonnets* . . . . . By E. C. O'Neill.
54. *Francis Bacon* . . . . . By Prof. A. R. Wallace, M.A.
55. *The Brontës* . . . . . By Mrs. Munro.
56. *Carlyle* . . . . . By L. MacLean Watt.
57. *Dante* . . . . . By A. G. Fergusson Howell
60. *A Dictionary of Synonyms* . . . . . By Austin K. Gray, B.A.
61. *Home Rule* . . . . . By L. G. Edmund Howard. Preface by Robert Harcourt, M.P.
62. *Practical Astronomy* . . . . . By H. Macpherson, Jr., F.R.A.S.
63. *Aviation* . . . . . By Sydney F. Walker, R.N.
64. *Navigation* . . . . . By William Hall, R.N., B.A.
65. *Pond Life* . . . . . By E. C. Ash, M.R.A.C.
66. *Dialectics* . . . . . By Alex. Bryce, M.D., D.P.H.
67. *Aristotle* . . . . . By Prof. A. E. Taylor, M.A., F.B.A.
68. *Friedrich Nietzsche* . . . . . By M. A. Mudge.
69. *Ennchen: A Philosophy of Life* . . . . . By A. J. Jones, M.A., B.Sc., Ph.D.
70. *The Experimental Psychology of Beauty* . . . . . By C. W. Valentine, B.A., D.Phil.
71. *The Problem of Truth* . . . . . By H. Wildon Carr, Litt.D.
72. *The Church of England* . . . . . By Rev. Canon Masterman.
74. *The Free Churches* . . . . . By Rev. Edward Shillito, M.A.
75. *Judaism* . . . . . By Ephraim Levine, M.A.
76. *Theosophy* . . . . . By Annie Besant.
78. *Wellington and Waterloo* . . . . . By Major G. W. Redway
79. *Medieval Socialism* . . . . . By Ede. Jarrett, O.P., M.A.
80. *Syndicalism* . . . . . By J. H. Harley, M.A.
81. *Co-operation* . . . . . By Joseph Clayton.
83. *Insurance as a Means of Investment* . . . . . By W. A. Robertson, F.F.A.
85. *A History of English Literature* . . . . . By A. Compton-Rickett, Litt.D.
87. *Charles Lamb* . . . . . By Flora Manson.
88. *Goethe* . . . . . By Prof. C. H. Haskard, Litt.D.
92. *The Training of the Child* . . . . . By G. Spiller.
93. *Tennyson* . . . . . By Aaron Watson.
94. *The Nature of Mathematics* . . . . . By P. E. B. Jourdain, M.A.
95. *Applications of Electricity* . . . . . By Alex. Ogilvie, B.Sc.
96. *Gardening* . . . . . By A. Cecil Bartlett.
98. *Atlas of the World* . . . . . By J. Bartholomew, I.R.G.S.
101. *Luther and the Reformation* . . . . . By Leonard D. Agate, M.A.
103. *Turkey and the Eastern Question* . . . . . By John Macdonald, M.A.
104. *Architecture* . . . . . By Mrs. Arthur Bell.
105. *Trade Unions* . . . . . By Joseph Clayton.
106. *Everyday Law* . . . . . By J. J. Adams.
108. *Shelley* . . . . . By Sydney Waterlow, M.A.
110. *British Birds* . . . . . By F. B. Kirkman, B.A.
111. *Spiritualism* . . . . . By J. Arthur Hill.
112. *Kindergarten Teaching at Home* . . . . . By Two Members of the National Froebel Union.
113. *Schopenhauer* . . . . . By Margrieta Beer, M.A.
114. *The Stock Exchange* . . . . . By J. F. Wheeler.
115. *Coleridge* . . . . . By S. L. Benson.
116. *The Crusades* . . . . . By M. M. C. Cahrop.
117. *Wild Flowers* . . . . . By Macpherson Skene, B.Sc.
118. *Principles of Logic* . . . . . By Stanley Williams, B.A.
119. *The Foundations of Religion* . . . . . By Stanley A. Cook, M.A.
120. *History of Rome* . . . . . By A. F. Giles, M.A.
121. *Land, Industry, and Taxation* . . . . . By Frederick Verinder.

LONDON AND EDINBURGH: T. C. & E. C. JACK  
NEW YORK: DODGE PUBLISHING CO.















